

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS APPEALS

EVELINA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL APPEAL
Save a child's life



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Why I would never be an MP
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Tunnel safety measures approved

Eurostar to start running again today

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

PASSENGER trains through the Channel Tunnel will restart today, 15 days after fire forced Eurotunnel to suspend all services.

A close-to-normal Eurostar service between London Waterloo and Paris and Brussels will resume this morning, and Le Shuttle car trains will operate a restricted timetable from Tuesday. But freight services of the kind involved in last month's fire remain suspended, pending further investigation by the French authorities.

The Anglo-French Channel Tunnel Safety Authority said last night that it was satisfied with extra safety precautions proposed by Eurotunnel while it repaired the damaged south tunnel. The authority said it had obtained necessary information, explanation and assurances. "It is now satisfied that the necessary safety equipment is available and that revised operating and emergency procedures are in place. The authority has advised the intergovernmental commission that it raises no objection on safety grounds to the restarting of these services," a statement said.

The first Eurostar train is due to run out of Waterloo bound for Paris at 5.50 this morning with a further 11 services to Paris and seven to Brussels during the day. From tomorrow there will be 13 trains to Paris and seven to Brussels daily, only one fewer of the pre-fire schedule. The journey will take about half an hour longer than normal, but services will stick as close as possible to the normal timetable.

A company spokesman said: "We are delighted to be able to restart services. We are glad the safety authorities appear to have done such a thorough job."

"We don't expect to have that many people on the 5.50 train as it will take some time for people to hear the news that the service is back. But we expect by the time the 7.53 sets off from Waterloo to Paris that we shall have a lot of passengers and that business will be pretty brisk after that."

The Le Shuttle service starting next week will be about two-thirds of the normal service.

The breakthrough came after lengthy talks in London, Paris and Calais between members of the safety authority, British and French government officials and senior Eurotunnel executives.

Eddie Ryder, the head of the British delegation to the safety authority, said that Eurotunnel would be allowed to run six trains through the tunnel in each direction every hour while the repairs, which are expected to take six months to complete, were being carried out.

Eurotunnel evacuated out a full practice evacuation of a Eurostar train in the tunnel over the weekend to help to persuade the authority that it was safe, even with a five mile section out of action. It had also had to test all of its safety equipment in the tunnel, including the smoke detectors, smoke proof cross-passage

doors between the tunnels, power supplies and radio and telephone links.

While the middle section of the south tunnel is out of action, Eurotunnel will have to keep manned trains on "hot stand-by" at both entrances to act as emergency evacuation vehicles in case of another fire. Mr Ryder said that he was wholly satisfied that passengers would be able to escape safely through the "permanent lifeboat" of the service tunnel if there were a second blaze. "The important thing to remember is that there is a safe haven within very close reach at all times," he said. "Passengers can be got into the safe haven of the service tunnel."

However, MPs expressed concern about the rapid reopening of the tunnel and Labour's Gwyneth Dunwoody said she would try to raise the matter under emergency parliamentary procedures. Roger Gale, the Conservative MP for Thanet North, who has been a long-standing critic of tunnel safety, said that he had "considerable lingering anxieties".

The total bill for the repairs to the tunnel, the cost of the freight train destroyed in the fire, and loss of revenue during the closure is expected to reach £80 million. However, Eurotunnel said that the company was covered by insurance for all but about £7 million of the losses.

Eurostar is to honour all valid free ticket applications made under the recent Times offer until August 31, 1997.



Rescue workers evacuating victims of last night's terrorist bombing of a Paris underground train

Paris train bombing kills two

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A POWERFUL bomb tore through a crowded underground train in central Paris last night, killing two people and injuring dozens in a sudden resumption of terrorist violence by Algerian Islamic extremists.

Within two hours, President Chirac gave a live television address condemning what he said was "without doubt, an act of barbarous terrorism".

Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, rushed to the scene and said the blast was caused by an explosive device in the second carriage of a train at

Port Royal RER station. Police said the 30 lb bomb was made with a gas canister — the trademark device, packed with nails, nuts and bolts, used by the terrorists in last year's bombing campaign. Then, eight people died in a series of subway blasts.

Jean-Louis Debré, the Interior Minister, put into full force "Operation Vigipirate", which has been in place for 15 months but was relaxed recently in the belief that the terrorist risk had diminished.

Two people died instantly, according to radio reports. Three of the injured were

described as being in a "life-threatening" condition.

President Chirac broke off a meeting with Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, to issue a pledge to hunt down the bombers. "My first thoughts go to the victims, their families and the injured," he said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Train stations and airports were put on high security alert. Under the Vigipirate plan, potential terrorist targets will be placed under 24-hour guard.

Algerian extremists accuse the French Government of

backing the regime of President Zéroual, who came to power after the cancellation of elections which Islamists were poised to win.

The explosion came just five days after a referendum in Algeria, changing the constitution by banning Islamic parties and extending the powers of the military-backed regime. The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most militant of the groups fighting to institute Islamic rule, threatened to kill anyone voting in favour of the new constitution, but it was approved by an overwhelming majority.

In the behind-the-scenes ministerial power struggle over Europe, the sceptics had been vanquished. The Right were last night furious with Mr Major, alleging that he had given in to the Clarke-Heseltine axis and prevented the party adopting an electoral policy that would have set the Tories apart from Labour.

Mr Major's declaration that the policy would not change came in reply to Tony Blair, the Labour leader, in the Commons. It was received in silence by the Tories and cheered by Labour MPs.

Major is not for turning on euro strategy

By PHILIP WEBSTER
POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR and Michael Heseltine joined forces yesterday to crush the hopes of the Tory Right that the Conservatives could go into the general election on a pledge to keep Britain out of the European single currency.

The Prime Minister dismissed Euro-sceptics by ruling out a change in the wait-and-see policy in the present Parliament and, for the first time, in the election campaign itself. The hardening of Mr Major's opposition to a U-turn came after two days of intense speculation that he might be about to shift and to launch a backstairs campaign to persuade Kenneth Clarke, the Cabinet's foremost European, to go along with him.

The opposite has happened. A fierce response by the Chancellor on Monday to any idea of a retreat strengthened the Westminster opinion that he would resign if the policy changed. By last night, the policy of keeping open options on the single currency appeared to be set in stone, much firmer than it had been on Monday morning.

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"This has been a bad day," a ministerial aide said last night. *Continued on page 2, col 6*

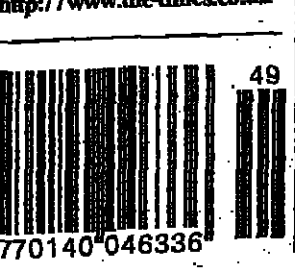
Leading article, page 17

SPORT
MASHONLAND
ENGLAND
VIEWERS MAY FIND SOME OF THESE SCENES DISTURBING

England struggle
England, fielding their intended Test side, struggled to 175 for nine on the opening day of their match against Mashonaland in Harare. Robert Croft was top scorer with 66 not out. *Page 48*

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Frozen lake in crater may help man to live on Moon

By NIGEL HAWKES
AND QUENTIN LETTS

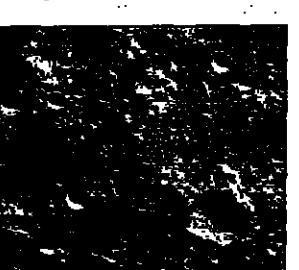
A FROZEN lake found deep inside a crater on the dark side of the Moon has greatly increased the chances that man may be able to live there one day.

Until now the Moon has been thought to be bone dry. But yesterday American scientists involved with the Clementine satellite which orbited the Moon in 1994 said it had found evidence that ice exists in a deep crater near the lunar south pole.

Examination of radar signals bounced off the lunar surface by Clementine has convinced the team that material at the bottom of a crater nearly eight miles deep is frozen water. The guess is that the water was carried there by a comet which crashed into the Moon 3.6 billion years ago,

creating the South Pole-Aitken crater. Because the south side of the Moon is always dark, the temperature in the crater is minus 230C, preventing the ice from escaping. The ice lake is estimated to be 25 feet deep and 200 yards wide.

It is thought likely that other patches of ice exist on the unexplored dark side of the Moon. The Clementine satellite



A lunar image from the Clementine satellite

was a low-cost mission launched by scientists from the Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation and the US Naval Research Laboratory. After going into orbit around the Moon it sent back data for several months. Detailed maps of the southern half of the Moon taken by Clementine were published later in the journal *Science*.

Scientists involved have hinted several times since then that some of the data gave evidence of water, but have had difficulty convincing others. If they are right, colonising the Moon or using it as a way-station for more distant space exploration is a more realistic possibility.

Anthony Cook, of the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles, said: "With water there, you could grow plants, grow food, make fuel, make your own air."

Doctors swamped in meningitis alert

By JEREMY LAURANCE AND DAVID CHARTER

WORRIED students besieged doctors to seek advice about meningitis yesterday as the deaths of two more undergraduates were reported.

Twelve cases of meningitis have been reported at universities across the country in the past two weeks, and four of the patients have died. Campuses affected have offered mass vaccinations, but even colleges where there have been no cases are reporting increased anxiety among students.

Dr Paul Coathup at the University of East Anglia in Norwich said that patient numbers had gone up by almost a third since the meningitis cluster at Cardiff was reported. "We are in the middle of the flu season, and no sooner does meningitis hit the headlines than everyone thinks that when they get flu they have got meningitis."

The university health service in Norwich was preparing to print thousands of information leaflets, while Southampton University has programmed computer terminals to display information about meningitis when users log on. Bath University medical centre was also said to be very busy reassuring students who played in sports teams in Cardiff over the weekend.

Two students at the University of Wales have died of meningitis and a further three cases have been confirmed there. The other students to die were at Bradford University and at Brighton College of Technology. Public health officials were considering whether to vaccinate the 18,000 students at Brighton, but immunisation was not being offered at Bradford as Continued on page 2, col 4

Accounting for others brings a reward of £200,000 a year

By JON ASHWORTH
AND ROBERT BRUCE

THE accountancy firm, Ernst & Young, has disclosed that its 412 partners earn an average of £200,000 each a year, making them among the top earners in Britain. The figures were outlined in its first published report and accounts.

The exercise, part of a drive towards greater openness in the profession, revealed that since 1993 the firm's partners earned a minimum of

£170,000 a year. Of 25.6 million taxpayers in Britain, only 25,000 earn £200,000 or more; they include accountants, lawyers, directors of privatised utilities, rock stars and self-made millionaires.

Ernst & Young is only the second of the Big Six accountancy firms to publish its annual report and accounts. KPMG, another of the Big Six, set the trend earlier this year.

Yesterday's publication showed that Nick Land, senior partner of Ernst & Young, earned £427,000 in the year to

end-June, which was less than anticipated. In 1995 Colin Sharman, senior partner of KPMG, earned £740,000. The point was not lost on Mr Land, who said: "I'm a pauper compared to Mr Sharman."

He added: "The decision to publish was part of a move to become more open. It was somewhat hypocritical to talk to our people about transparency and not talk about the financial information."

Ernst & Young's accounts also showed that its fee income for the year

had risen 14 per cent to £450 million. The firm had suffered three flat years which were blamed on the recession.

Last week, Deloitte & Touche reported that its earnings had risen by 8 per cent to £401 million, but it has no plans to follow KPMG or Ernst & Young in publishing full accounts this year.

Well-paid as they are, partners in accountancy firms would argue that they deserve their rewards. Training to become a chartered accountant is difficult and there is a high dropout rate.

EAU D'ISSEY

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Fire, alarms and expulsions drown out shock of a straight answer

HE who laughs last laughs longest. John Major scored an apparent direct hit on Tony Blair at Prime Minister's Questions yesterday. He offered the Labour leader precisely the undertaking he asked for.

This left a startled Blair floundering, for he had not thought Major dare risk it and was unprepared to respond. Major's pledge was (Blair had supposed) too dangerous to volunteer. In this supposition, Mr Blair may eventually be proved right.

It was a day for the un-

pected. Arrivals at Westminster that morning had been greeted by the whole panoply of the London Fire Brigade blocking Whitehall. HM Treasury was apparently on fire.

Later the Chancellor of the Exchequer arrived at the dispatch box, if not actually singing, apologising for inadequacies in his Statement, which, because of the fire, he had had to pen himself at short notice.

Ministers writing their own speeches? What is Britain coming to? Which had perished in the blaze: Clarke's speech or

his speechwriter? He did not explain.

The reign of chaos continued in Prime Minister's Questions. After months of putting down questions to the PM, Matthew Parris, the Tory MP for Southport, may have thought the possibility of actually being called was only a distant dream. When it occurred yesterday it turned into a nightmare.

Halfway through his plunkingly helpful question to Mr Major, no doubt rehearsed on the train all the



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

way from Preston, mayhem broke out in the Strangers' Gallery.

A protesting group (we never advertise their names) hung a banner over the balcony and began screaming. Burly attendants struggled to prise them from the balustrade which they gripped like chimpanzees. MPs gawped up from be-

low, only Mr Major staring at his shoes. Finally, the attendants, who outnumbered the protesters, succeeded and made their exit, bearing their wriggling captives aloft. At this point a section of the Strangers broke into applause for the rapid and muscular performance of the attendants. The instinct of the English is to support the forces of authority

against any breach of the peace.

Not so the Welsh — or not Plaid Cymru's Cynog Dafis (Ceredigion & Pembrokeshire), anyway. He began a one-man display of solidarity with the protesters.

I had hoped that the Strangers might now divide into supporters of the attendants (cheer-led by the Home Secretary) and supporters of the protesters (cheer-led by Mr Dafis), and begin fighting among themselves; but Madam Speaker forestalled this, ordering Dafis to leave the

Chamber at once. He did not struggle and she did not have to carry him, though (a small man) he would have been no match for Miss Boothroyd and the press would have enjoyed a fight.

In the memories of many observers, the morning's fire and the afternoon's riot will overshadow the small exchange between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition which came between them; but it may prove of more lasting significance than either.

Major to say that his intention to keep Britain's options on single currency open right up until the election "remains unequivocally the position of the Government".

"That remains unequivocally the position of the Government," Major said, with chilling calm.

Sunned, Mr Blair never recovered his composure, and, after a second question, gave up his third.

Whether Mr Blair was stunned by the PM's boldness, or by his own good fortune, only time will tell.

Firms face big fine for each illegal worker

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

EMPLOYERS face fines of up to £5,000 for each illegal worker they hire under new laws being introduced next month to deal with bogus asylum seekers and immigrants.

Seventeen million workers a year will be liable to produce official documents, including a former payslip, passport or birth certificate as part of the measure.

The law, which aims to curb illegal employment, particularly casual labour, will cost British industry an estimated one-off sum of £19.8 million to bring into operation plus a further £11.6 million a year. Industries relying on contract or casual labour, such as catering, farming, construction, food processing and cleaning, are likely to be hit hardest by the measure.

Under the law employers could be fined a maximum of £5,000 for each illegal person they hire, though the Government has decided not to introduce jail sentences even for the most persistent culprits.

Ann Widdecombe, a Home Office Minister, said the law would be operated with a "light touch" but she warned employers who deliberately and repeatedly used illegal workers that they would be hit hardest.

She highlighted a rise from fewer than 4,000 in 1988 to 10,000 in 1995 in the number of people identified as working illegally in Britain. "Easy access to jobs has made the UK a magnet for illegal immigrants. This new penalty will help stop people working here illegally and taking jobs from people with a legal right to work."

Miss Widdecombe said the employers were not expected

to act as immigration officers or to be able to detect forged documents. She said that if a potential employee refused to produce documentation, an employer would be under no legal obligation to inform the authorities. "We would be grateful if they did," she added.

The new criminal offence of employing someone who does not have permission to be in or to work in this country takes effect on January 27. It does not act retrospectively.

Although employers do not have to make the checks on potential employees' documents, guidance being sent to 1.1 million firms warns them that if they are not made, there is no statutory or absolute defence to the criminal charge.

The guidance also warns companies that they are likely to be breaking the Race Relations Act if they attempt to avoid prosecution by refusing to consider for a job anyone who looks or sounds foreign.

Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, warned that the checks would harm race relations, place further burdens on business and prove ineffective in tackling illegal working.

He said that because of the lack of security on the issue of birth certificates and National Insurance documents, employee checks would be unlikely to prove effective in stopping people working illegally. He added: "They will almost certainly be effective in limiting further the employment prospects of black and Asian people and damage race relations."

A spokesman for the CBI declined to comment on the guidance.



A firefighter is cleaned of possible asbestos contamination after the Whitehall fire

Blaze brings Treasury to halt

By RUSSELL BENKINS AND MARCUS BINNEY

THREE ministers were among 1,000 civil servants and officials evacuated to safety from their Whitehall offices yesterday as more than 30 firefighters tackled a blaze in a basement room of the Treasury building.

For a time officials at English Heritage feared a Windsor Castle-style blaze but Edwardian fireproof construction proved its worth and the fire service was able to damp down the fire within three-quarters of an hour.

William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Angela Knight, Economic Secretary, and Phillip Oppenheim, the Junior Treasury Minister, joined the stream of people responding to the alarm at 10.11am.

Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus traced the source of the blaze to an electrical junction box under rooms occupied by the Office of National Statistics. It was swiftly extinguished. However, smoke had spread up the lift shafts and along corridors causing some damage to the Grade II listed building but no Treasury documents or papers are thought to have

been destroyed. There were copings over possible contamination when firefighters "could asbestos" had been used to shield the wiring. It was later established that there was no leak of asbestos material.

The emergency meant that much of government came to a standstill for two hours and upset Treasury preparations for the last parliamentary debate on the Budget in the afternoon. Undeterred, Mrs Knight rounded up her private office officials and senior civil servants for an impromptu meeting in a Methodist hall coffee shop.

Major and Heseltine join forces on EMU

Continued from page 1

night. John Major has been kidnapped by Clarke and Heseltine. They are yesterday's men fighting yesterday's battles.

Right-wing MPs promised to carry on trying to change policy, but sceptical pre-election statements from Mr Major about the likelihood of Britain going into a monetary union during the next Parliament appeared to be the most they could realistically hope for.

The renewed bout of Euro-lever in the Tory party came after it was reported on Monday that Mr Major had decided to try to change the policy. The source of the reports is unclear, but the finger of suspicion at Westminster last night was being pointed at a Euro-sceptic Cabinet minister.

Mr Major said in London yesterday they deserved "the Booker Prize for fiction". In spite of Mr Clarke's and Downing Street's denials, speculation persisted until Mr Heseltine went on *The World at One* on Radio 4 yesterday and gave the most categorical statement so far by a Cabinet minister that the policy remains unchanged. The Government would not make any decision until all the negotiations were over and "the ink is dry on the paper".

That was not due until next June at the earliest — after the election. "We are not going to change our position in the election campaign or this Parliament," he said.

Later in the Commons Mr Blair was ready to pounce. He asked whether Mr Major stood by the April 5 position that options would be kept open at the election. Mr Major replied that that "remains unequivocally the position of the Government".

Labour officials were delighted by yesterday's exchanges. And one Euro-sceptic observed: "The Cabinet has been teetering on the brink of changing the policy. This will go on."

Leading article, page 17

Clause falls thanks to absent Hon Friends

The Government suffered an embarrassing defeat yesterday when a key clause of its education Bill, which allows grant-maintained schools to expand by 50 per cent, was voted down by Labour in committee. Labour managed to inflict the 9-8 defeat because two members of the Tory-dominated committee were absent — one trying to find the other.

John Marshall left the committee room to go down to thank Norma Major for attending the launch of a new charity for youngsters with learning difficulties which he was hosting. When it became clear that a vote was looming, Anthony Coombs, a junior whip, ran out to fetch him. The Government will try to reinstate the lost clause at the final report stage. Bill. The defeat was the second in 24 hours. On Monday the Government was defeated in the Lords over a clause in the Police Bill.

Teenager found safe

A teenager who went missing for more than 48 hours was reunited with her parents yesterday. Sarah Ayley, 15, disappeared from her home in Downham Market, Norfolk, early on Saturday evening. She turned up at a nearby farmhouse at about 5am yesterday, after apparently living rough in outlying barns and woods for two days. It is thought she was worried about her mock GCSEs.

Child labour inquiry

Littlewoods has launched an inquiry into the source of some of its goods after police in Bangkok issued a warrant for the arrest of a businessman accused of exploiting child labour. Adam Lisowski, an Austrian national, runs a number of companies which provide clothes for Littlewoods and other stores. Former workers at his companies claimed last month that they had been replaced by children.

NHS staff fatigued

More than one in four NHS workers is suffering from fatigue, according to a survey of 12,000 staff. Women doctors and managers experience the worst mental pressure while nurses and auxiliaries are more prone to physical exhaustion. The Psychological Therapies Research Centre at Leeds University found that 27 per cent of NHS employees were fatigued, compared with 17 per cent of the public.

Woman in command



The deputy chief constable of Northamptonshire is to become the second woman to head a British police force. Elizabeth Neville, left, is taking over as the new chief constable of Wiltshire police, commanding 1,180 officers, next year. She follows Pauline Clare, who became head of Lancashire police last year. Now in her early 40s, Miss Neville studied politics, philosophy and psychology at Oxford.

Meningitis alert swamps doctors

Continued from page 1

the strain of meningitis had not been identified.

Further cases have been reported at Southampton Institute of Higher Education and at York, Portsmouth and Bournemouth universities.

Students face a higher risk than the general population of contracting meningitis because of their geographical mobility and lifestyle. Professor Simon Kroll of St Mary's Hospital, London, said that freshmen were more vulnerable because they came from all over the country to a campus where they might encounter germs to which they had not previously been exposed.

In these circumstances, sporadic cases will occur that are linked not so much by individual contact between cases as by exposure to an organism which that population has not come across before," he said.

Professor Kroll emphasised that meningitis remained very rare and cautioned against

undue alarm, although students should be made aware of symptoms of the disease.

Meningitis affects about five students per 100,000, compared with two per 100,000 among the general population. The most vulnerable people remain babies aged six months to a year, with 50 cases per 100,000.

While the disease remains rare, its incidence has been rising for the past two years and is now at record levels. By November 15, 2,042 cases of meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia had been reported this year, compared with 1,827 for the whole of last year.

Symptoms include fever, severe headache, nausea and vomiting, an aversion to bright light and a stiff neck. Meningococcal septicaemia can produce fever with vomiting, a rash, cold hands and feet, rapid breathing and pains in the stomach, muscles and joints. Early treatment with large doses of intravenous antibiotics is essential.

Howard offers concession to pacify handgun rebels

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD, the Home Secretary, will today announce further concessions to gun owners in a doomed attempt to avert a second Tory rebellion on the Firearms Bill.

The move could lead to a further significant reduction in the number of guns in circulation. Some 160,000 of the 200,000 handguns legally held in Britain will have to be destroyed or handed in under what Mr Howard described as the toughest gun-control laws in the world.

Mr Howard will announce the latest government climbdown in response to Tory backbench pressure during the report stage of the Firearms Bill in the House of Commons today. But it will not be enough to avert a second damaging revolt.

Sir Jerry Wiggin, the Tory MP for Weston-super-Mare, said last night: "I will be voting against the Government. This is a concession

which I welcome but it is not enough. There is still no compensation for the gun makers or shooting ranges which will be forced to close down or for the loss of jobs which could run into thousands."

"It is simple. If you make something illegal on one day which was legal the day before, you should pay compensation. This does not go nearly far enough to persuade me to support the Government."

Last month more than 30 Tory MPs rebelled against Mr Howard's curbs on firearms ownership in response to the Dunblane massacre, despite a doubling of the compensation package from £50 million to £100 million. The extra money covered gun accessories such as reloaders, special sights and holsters. The latest compromise will cost a further £12 million.

22. Others will not be able to afford the fees. If they are prepared to forfeit their guns they will be entitled to compensation for them.

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Howe's nephew tipped for Scott seat

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT



Lord Howe: his nephew might be candidate

MARTIN HOWE, a Euro-sceptic barrister, has emerged as a front-runner to succeed Sir Nicholas Scott in the safe seat of Kensington and Chelsea after the MP's deselection as Tory election candidate.

But a handwagon is also forming behind Sir John Wheeler, the Northern Ireland Minister, whose neighbouring Westminster seat disappears in boundary changes. Sir John, 56, is seen by many association members as capable of uniting the association after the Scott deselection battle.

One member added that local Tories on the Conservative Central Office candi-

dates' list might favour Sir John, who "would probably serve only one Parliament and stand down. They would then be vying to step into his shoes."

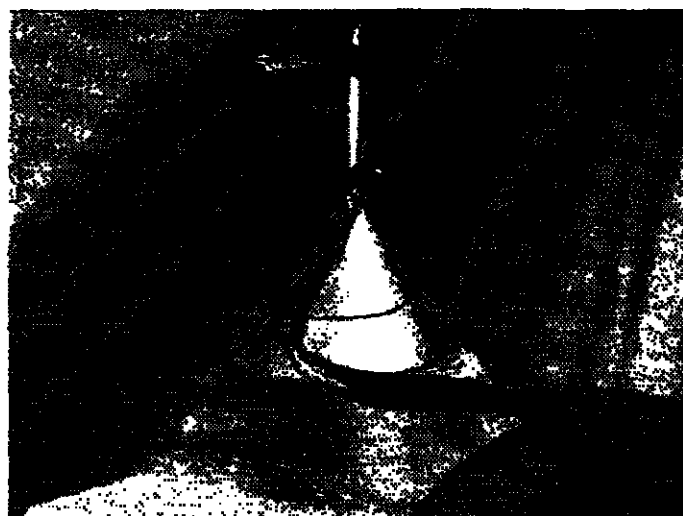
The Euro-sceptic views of Mr Howe, 41, whose uncle is the European former Foreign Secretary, Lord Howe of Aberavon, would go down well in the association. Mr Howe co-authored a paper in October for the Institute of Economic Affairs arguing that Britain might be better off outside the European Union. Mr Howe declined to comment yesterday.

Joan Hanham, the leader of Kensington and Chelsea council, who was shortlisted last year, is also in the frame. Many councillors are backing her candidature as they would like to succeed her at

the town hall. A second woman being linked with the seat is Melinda Libby, a manager at the National Westminster Bank who lives in Chelsea. Dudley Fishburn, the MP for Kensington who had announced he was standing down, might be tempted out of his planned early retirement.

There was no sign of Sir Nicholas or his wife Cecilia at their Battersea home yesterday. After Monday night's vote he went to the home of Jean Craig, the deputy chairman who was his chief supporter, who had planned a celebration party in the event of his victory. One person who was present said: "Nick thanked everyone for their hard work and support. It was very sad."

SCENTS OF WONDER.



POPY MORENI

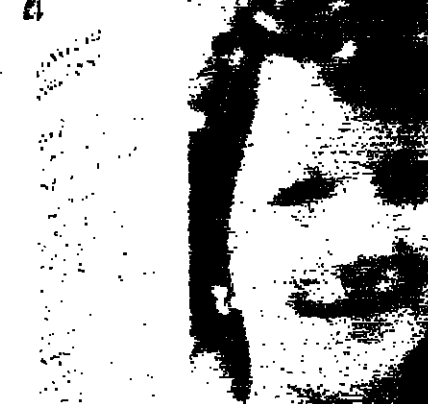
This 'horizontal' perfume of sensual sophistication from fashion designer Popy Moreni is new to Harrods this Christmas. The cleverly designed bottle by Thierry de Basmakoff is a unique creation of desire and beauty. If you purchase the 50ml Eau de Parfum Spray at £49, you will receive a miniature fragrance with our compliments while stocks last. Popy Moreni is also available in three sizes of Eau de Toilette.

The Perfumery, Ground Floor.

Harrods

Harrods Limited, Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7TL. Telephone 0171-730 1234

try clears
Cotswold



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Jury clears odd-job man of Cotswold path murder

By JOANNA BALE AND BILL FROST

AN ODD-JOB man was cleared yesterday of murdering Vikki Thompson, a mother of two who was bludgeoned to death while out walking her dog. A jury at Oxford Crown Court took just 50 minutes unanimously to find Mark Weston, 21, not guilty.

Mrs Thompson was hit around the head with a stone or rock on a popular Cotswold walk just half a mile from her home in the Oxfordshire village of Ascott-under-Wychwood.

Mr Weston, who was a near neighbour of Mrs Thompson, showed no emotion as he heard that he was to be freed after 10 months in jail. The verdict was greeted by cheers of delight from villagers who had come to support his father, Alec, in the public



Weston: denied talking to Vikki Thompson



Vikki and Jonathan Thompson were childhood sweethearts who had been married for nine years

gallery. Mrs Thompson's husband, Jonathan, 31, left the court accompanied by friends and family who had attended the 14-day hearing.

He said in a statement: "I feel saddened and disappointed." He added: "Bringing Vikki's murderer to justice would have helped us to come to terms with what had happened and allow us to look to the future."

"More than this, we could be sure that no other family would have to go through what we have been through at the hands of Vikki's killer. Instead tonight we know that Vikki's killer, whoever that person may be, remains at large to kill again."

Mrs Thompson, 30, was attacked while walking her Sheltie dog, Daisy, down Shipton Lane, which leads out of the village, on a hot Saturday afternoon in August last

year. She was found covered in blood and semi-conscious by neighbours, who led a frantic search for her after Daisy returned home alone.

Police think she was initially attacked in the lane and then dragged across a field and over two wire fences. She was then attacked again and left for dead at the base of a railway embankment.

Her husband, a computer salesman, told the court that he had rushed to her side and tried to keep her alive by asking questions about their children's names. She mumbled only a few words to him, including telling him, "It's all got too much," before lapsing into a coma. She died six days later.

The murdered woman had been due to start a degree course in mathematics and computing at Oxford Brookes University. On the eve of the

attack the couple had celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary.

Mr Weston was described in court as a loner who had lived with his parents in the village all his life.

Nicholas Browne, QC, for the prosecution, had alleged that he escaped on foot leaving three footprints and was seen "in a hurry and perspiring" on a nearby road half an hour later. Soil experts told the jury that pollen from a sample footprint matched that found on Weston's boots.

However, Alan Woodley, a farmer, said he had made the prints, which were found on his land. A footwear expert called by the defence concluded that the prints were made by a shoe smaller than Mr Weston's size 12.

Mr Weston told the trial: "I have never spoken to Mrs Thompson. I have seen her walking around the village once or twice. I did not kill her. I did not see her that afternoon."

Outside the court Christopher Edwards, Mr Weston's solicitor, called on the police to reopen their inquiry. "My client is obviously mightily relieved at the verdict this afternoon," he said. "The fact it has taken less than an hour to bring in speaks for itself and Mr Weston's name is now cleared once and for all."

Detective Superintendent Jon Bound, who led the investigation, said afterwards: "It would not be appropriate for Thames Valley Police to make any comment on the jury's decision."

Road rage victim's fiancée tells of killer's staring eyes

By STEPHEN FARRELL

THE fiancée of the "road rage" victim Lee Harvey yesterday described the "staring" eyes of his killer as she confronted him moments after the fatal attack. Tracey Andrews, 27, wept as she recounted the chase through narrow country lanes that ended with the 25-year-old father suffering a slashed throat and more than 15 stab wounds.

Miss Andrews appealed for witnesses to the attack at 11pm on Sunday near the couple's flat in Alvechurch, Hereford and Worcester. Mr Harvey's white Escort RS2000 turbo had overtaken a battered Ford Sierra as they drove home on the A38 from a pub in Bromsgrove. Detectives confirmed that the chase, at up to 60mph, could have taken up to 45 minutes.

"I was frightened," Miss Andrews said. "I was shouting at Lee to slow down. Just ignore them and stop the car, but you know what a lot of men are like. He didn't like anybody telling him how to drive anyway." It ended when both drivers stopped and con-

fronted each other. When the Sierra's driver returned to his car — an F-registration which may have had damage to the front nearside — his passenger, an overweight man in his mid-twenties, wearing a dark donkey jacket, climbed out and attacked Mr Harvey.

Miss Andrews said: "I saw the man hit Lee. I don't know what with. I got out of the car because I'm not the sort of person to sit there. Lee was on the floor and I thought he had been hit. Then I went over to the man. We had a confrontation. He hit me... when I got up he was walking back to the car."

"I noticed that to me he didn't seem normal. It was just the way he looked. His eyes, they were staring eyes."

Miss Andrews described her fiancé, an unemployed bus driver, as a "lovely, funny, caring" man who was a good father to his daughter, Danielle, 5, from a previous relationship and to her daughter, Carla, also 5. They planned to marry on June 7 next year.



Tracey Andrews weeping as she appealed for information yesterday on the murder of her fiancé, Lee Harvey

PC shot unarmed man 'as first resort, not last'

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A POLICE officer who shot and killed a suspected car thief went on trial at the Old Bailey yesterday accused of murder. David Ewin died from internal injuries two weeks after he was shot by PC Patrick Hodgson, a member of the crew of a Metropolitan armed response vehicle, in February last year.

John Bevan, for the prosecution, told the court that Mr Ewin was shot as he tried to drive off in a Toyota that had been boxed in by police and other vehicles near Hango to the south of the village in southwest London.

"Ewin was totally unarmed. He had nowhere to go," Mr Bevan said. "His hands were on the steering wheel and the only danger he posed was to the bodywork of the vehicles around him."

"If shooting Ewin was the only option, it is tantamount to saying any car thief driving recklessly may reasonably be shot by a police officer. Hodgson's action of drawing his gun was not done by him as the last resort but as the first resort and against an unarmed man."

On the day of the shooting, PC Hodgson had been the map reader in the three-strong ARV crew, which was led by Sergeant Kathryn White. They had picked up a general police message about a Toyota MR2 stolen in northwest London. As the police headed north towards the bridge along Castlerau, PC Patrick Kelly, the radio operator, had seen the Toyota parked on the other

side of road pointing south. Mr Bevan said Mr Ewin had gone into a shop to buy a can of beer. Blood tests later showed that he was 1½ times over the drink-driving limit. He had also taken cannabis, heroin and cocaine. Another man was in the car. At the check-out, Mr Ewin had looked out and said: "Oh no." He had put down the beer and run out.

Mr Bevan said Sergeant White, who was driving, had seen PC Hodgson go to the driver's door and grab hold of his shirt through the window. She brought her car alongside the Toyota, Mr Bevan said, while PC Hodgson held Mr Ewin round the neck. The car was still going back and forth and the policeman had been in danger of being squashed between the Toyota and the police Rover.

PC Hodgson had shouted "armed police" and made his way round to the pavement side. Sergeant White had seen him pointing his gun at the driver, demanding that he stop. Mr Bevan said that as the sergeant looked over her shoulder, she saw PC Hodgson fire two shots.

Mr Bevan said at one point the policeman was at risk of being squashed between the Toyota and the police car but he did have other options. He could have stepped back from the car, arrested Ewin and holstered his gun and treated it as a stolen car incident. The case continues.

Conviction in Flockton Grey case was 'unjust'

By MIKE HORSNELL

THREE judges in the Court of Appeal yesterday began a final inquiry into the result of the Knighton Auction Stakes for two-year-olds at Leicester in 1982. The Flockton Grey racehorse scandal returned to court to hear new evidence.

The prosecution say that a three-year-old horse, Good Hand, masquerading as Flockton Grey, won the race by 20 lengths at 10-1, having been very heavily backed.

Kenneth Richardson, 58, with two associates, his racing manager, Colin Mathison, 60, and driver Peter Boddy, is challenging his conviction at York Crown Court in 1984 of conspiracy to defraud bookmakers. Richardson, from Hutton, East Riding of Yorkshire, was given a nine month suspended sentence and fined £20,000, while Mr Mathison was fined £3,000 and Mr Boddy conditionally discharged.

Richardson was also banned from racing by the Jockey Club for 25 years.

Richardson, a businessman who owned both horses, says the winning horse was another mount entirely unconnected to him.

Edmund Lawson, QC, for the three men, told Lord Justice Rose, Mr Justice Keene and Mr Justice Poole that photographs taken of Good Hand in 1981 and witness statements relating to the true identity of the winning horse had not been disclosed by the prosecution at the original trial. The case continues.

Dame Barbara tells of shamed peer's courage and care in jail

By RICHARD DUCS

LORD BROCKET, the disgraced peer now serving five years for fraud, has revealed in a letter from prison to Dame Barbara Cartland how he both fears for his life but also enjoys teaching other inmates to read and write in prison.

Lord Brocket was wounded with a razor at Littlehey jail in Cambridgeshire last week. In an earlier letter to the romantic novelist, a former neighbour in Hertfordshire, he said he was in fear of attack because he was to be a prosecution witness against a prisoner who stole from him.

Lord Brocket, 43, said his fear centred on an Asian gang in the jail: "My main problem is trying to avoid being knifed. I'm getting regular threats as I am the only witness left against them. All the others have been beaten up or intimidated. If it gets too out of hand, I will tell the police that I cannot appear as a witness."

Dame Barbara, from



Brocket receiving regular threats

Essendon, Hertfordshire, has written to the Lord Chancellor's department to try to have Lord Brocket, a former Guardsman, moved to an open prison. She said: "If you go into prison as Mr Snooks, you are all right. But if you are Lord Snooks, you go through hell. He has helped a lot of people in his life."

Lord Brocket was jailed for a £4.5 million insurance fraud by claiming that part of his collection of classic cars had

been stolen, when they had been destroyed. He is planning an appeal against the length of sentence. His letter to Dame Barbara reveals a shift in attitude from a man once considered aloof. He wrote: "I've been trying to help some of the poor illiterate chaps. One chap is delightful, only about 24, but has never had an education. I showed him a map of Britain. He's never seen one before."

"If society really cares about people and makes some attempt to help them, then society will also be helping itself, as crimes will drop."

Lord Brocket had his arm in a sling when he appeared at Luton Crown Court last week to admit one outstanding fraud charge. He was sentenced to two years, concurrent with his five-year term.

Charges against three inmates at Littlehey Prison, accused of wounding Brocket, who befriended Brocket, have been dropped because of insufficient evidence. The prison refused to comment.

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WE'LL OPEN OUR SKIES. WILL BILL OPEN HIS?

Right now, the British Government is locked in negotiations with the Americans over an 'open skies' deal for liberalisation of aviation between our two countries.

Whilst Britain is quite happy to welcome American airlines to the UK, the Americans aren't prepared to welcome UK airlines to the US. And that, we believe, is just not cricket.

Encouragingly, Sir George Young, our Secretary of State for Transport agrees with us.

Whilst giving evidence to the Transport Select Committee earlier this year, Sir George said:

"We will not simply roll over and accept the US version of liberalisation, known misleadingly in my opinion as 'open skies', which is clearly designed to tilt the market in favour of US airlines. We shall be seeking a new air service agreement which gives our carriers an opportunity to compete with US carriers on equal terms."

So how *unequal* are the terms at the moment?

What the Americans want is to be able to fly as many US aircraft as they like into Britain's airports, and then to pick up passengers in Britain and fly them on to Europe and the rest of the world. (Which would be fine if there were enough take off and landing slots.)

But what the Americans aren't prepared to give the UK is the right to land at US airports and then fly passengers on to other destinations in the US.

Nor are they prepared to give up any of the incredibly protectionist laws limiting the UK's right to invest in US airlines. Even though the US is already allowed to invest in the UK's airlines.

Nor are they even prepared to give up their one sided policy that dictates that US Government people must fly only on US airlines.

In fact the only so called concession that the American Government is prepared to make has nothing to do with 'open skies' at all.

It is to sanction the monopolistic merger between British Airways and American Airlines.

A merger that would normally be deemed illegal by the Americans because it is so anti-competitive. Especially as between them BA and AA control the lion's share of Heathrow's take off and landing slots.

In short, this is not an 'open' but a 'closed skies' deal. It offers nothing for the flying public. But it does offer a juicy monopoly for two of the world's biggest airlines.

We urge Sir George Young to stick to his guns, and negotiate a deal that will create a level playing field for all Britain's airlines, and that won't disadvantage either the British or American flying public.

Any other deal is most unwelcome.

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Public Record Office abdication papers

Germans offered to turn Windsors into puppet rulers

By ALAN HAMILTON AND VALERIE ELLIOTT

THE Duke and Duchess of Windsor were offered the position of puppet king and queen of Britain when Germany contacted the Duchess early in the Second World War, an intelligence report released yesterday by the Public Record Office suggests.

Other documents show that the Duke had already come to believe that he would be summoned back to London to re-occupy the throne after an abdication by George VI. He foresaw a scenario in which the Cabinet would resign and be replaced by a Labour government ready to sue for peace with Hitler.

Yesterday's documents, released exactly 60 years after the abdication of the former Edward VIII, flesh out the long-established picture of him as a petulant, ill-advised and often misguided figure during the war years, but one whose loyalty and patriotism were never in serious doubt.

Many of the papers were seen in advance by the author Philip Ziegler for his authorised biography of Edward VIII, published in 1990, substantial new disclosures can now only come from the Royal Archives at Windsor, which restrict material for up to 100 years.

The puppet ruler suggestion

is contained in an intelligence report from Prague of July, 1940. It is based on information from an unnamed source with contacts in German-occupied Czechoslovakia and reads: "Germans expect assistance from Duke and Duchess of Windsor, latter desiring at any price to be queen. Germans have been negotiating with her since June 27. Status quo in England accept understanding to form anti-Russian alliance. Germans propose to form opposition government under Duke of Windsor, having first changed public opinion by propaganda. Germans think King George will abdicate during attack on London."

At about the same time David Eccles, an Embassy official in Lisbon keeping tabs on the Windsors, reported: "I had some conversation today with the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Mr and Mrs George Wood and Major Philips. They are very nearly fifth column; at least they reckon we pushed France into a war she didn't want, and then let her down, and that the French armistice was the best possible thing they could do."

Churchill received other reports that, while in Lisbon, the Duke was keeping potentially bad company, including Senor Esperito Santo, a leading Portuguese banker who was said to be handling "German loot" from captive countries. The Duke subsequently began to manifest extreme defeatist and pacifist sympathies.

The papers contain a letter from the British Ambassador in Lisbon to the Foreign Office in 1943, reporting a meeting between the Duke and a young Spanish aristocrat, Count Nava de Tajo, three years earlier. "It was clear from the conversation of HRH that he expected the British Cabinet to resign in the near future, and to see the creation of a Labour government



Queen Elizabeth II in 1939: "an ambitious woman"



The Duke and Duchess of Windsor meeting Hitler in 1937. The Duke's wartime sympathies worried Churchill

which would enter into negotiations with Germany. He expected also that George VI would abdicate following a virtual revolution brought about by the fact that the ruling classes had utterly disgraced themselves, and that he [the Duke] would be summoned to return to England to occupy the throne," it says.

The Duke spoke of how England would become the leader of a coalition of France, Spain and Portugal, while Germany would be free to march against Russia. The Count suggested that all these ideas had been put into the Duke's head by Frenchmen and Spaniards who were playing Germany's game. The Duke continued that he thought the age of constitutional monarchy had passed, evidently believing that an age of *Führers* such as Pétain, Franco and Salazar had opened. "I was got rid of by the Tories," he complained. He also expressed himself with some force about Queen Elizabeth (now Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother) whom he termed "an ambitious woman".

In 1940 Churchill wrote: "The position of the Duke of Windsor on the Continent in recent months has been causing HM and HMG embarrassment as, though his loyalty is unimpeachable, there is always a backlash of Nazi intrigue which seeks to make trouble about him."

At the same time Sir Samuel Hoare, the Ambassador in Madrid, reported to London that the Duke was trying to impose conditions on a return to England, as he would be stuck there for the rest of the war. He demanded a brief meeting with the King and Queen for himself and the Duchess and further tried to insist that the encounter be formalised with an announcement in the Court Circular.

But London would not meet his conditions, and in a telegram to Churchill he remarked sourly: "My visits to England since the war have proved my presence there is an embarrassment to all concerned, myself included."

Philip Ziegler, page 16

Zulu tells of killing Britons on beach

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

THE last moments of two British women stabbed and hacked to death on a remote beach in South Africa four years have been described in court by a Zulu man who has said that he committed the unsolved murders.

Elijah Noam Sibiyi, 24, gave himself up to police at the weekend, claiming that he had killed Julie Godwin and her friend, Elizabeth Over, in Sodwana Bay on November 30, 1992. He pleaded guilty to the murders and, through an interpreter, told the court in Umbombo, northern Kwa-Zulu/Natal, that it had been "the day on which the women were supposed to die".

Sibiyi said calmly that he had attacked the two women in their four-wheel-drive vehicle with a bushknife and spear, robbed them and disposed of their bodies.

The women, both 30, were killed while sunbathing during a camping holiday in the marine reserve on the region's north coast. Their bodies were found washed up on the beach.

Sibiyi, a resident of nearby Mbazwana, told the court he had taken money from the women and bought clothes with it. He subsequently felt "very afraid" and asked for God's forgiveness. He burnt the stolen items, together with his clothes and weapons.

Police said that Sibiyi walked into the police station in Mbazwana four years to the day after the murders, saying he wanted to speak to officers. He did not request legal representation at his hearing. The magistrate ordered that Sibiyi be taken to the district surgeon. He has been remanded in custody until December 23.

CORRECTION

We have been asked by solicitors for Michelin Tyre plc and Michelin & Cie to make clear that the Michelin Man, or Bibendum figure, which appeared in a cartoon (November 29) about the French lorry drivers' strike, is the copyright work of Michelin & Cie. We apologise for the unauthorised use of the work in the cartoon.

Tax office will hear cathedral confession

By PAUL WILKINSON

A ROMAN CATHOLIC diocese is to be reported to the Inland Revenue after extra payments to a cathedral's music director were revealed at an industrial tribunal.

Joanne Connaughton, who worked for the diocese of Hallam at St Marie's Cathedral, Sheffield, received three payments of cash totalling £1,500 and a car valued at more than £4,000 after she complained that her salary was not big enough.

Details of the payments came out during a tribunal in the city in which Ms Connaughton, 32, was claiming sexual discrimination. She received £10,000 in an out-of-court settlement.

The tribunal had heard that Ms Connaughton, now a music lecturer at the University of Northumbria, worked for the diocese for seven years until August 1994. In that time her salary rose from £6,000 to £11,000. After she left, she discovered that her successor, Philip Jakob, was receiving £20,000.

The Sheffield diocese said the two salaries could not be compared. Alison Hampson, for the diocese, also said that when Ms Connaughton launched her case, she did not mention bonus payments of £500 a time received in 1993 and 1994, or that the diocese had bought a car costing £4,095 in November 1990. None was declared to the Inland Revenue.

The tribunal chairman, O.T.B. Davies, said: "We take a very serious view of the evidence we have heard. We think it is only appropriate for us to make a report to the Inland Revenue."

Ms Connaughton's claim had been backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission. Diana Brittan, the deputy chairwoman said: "This case was the first taken on whether or not a woman or man can claim equal pay with a successor of the opposite sex."

Renegade Anglican clergy return to the fold

By RUTH GLEDHILL RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

SIXTEEN Anglican clergy who left the Church of England over the decision to ordain women priests have converted back and have received permission to take services as Anglican clergy again, it was disclosed yesterday.

Of the 16, eight became Roman Catholics, but within the space of two years all had decided that their true home was in the Established Church.

One, the Rev Peter Bolton, who benefited from the "hardship" payments to Anglican clergy who re-

signed over the issue, is back on the Church of England payroll as vicar of Lower Broughton, near Salford, in the Manchester diocese.

Mr Bolton was vicar of St Paul's in Royton, Greater Manchester, and area dean of Tandle when he resigned. After just one year as a Roman Catholic, he sought to return to the Church of England and was made non-stipendiary minister of St Paul's, Salford, in June last year. He was made a vicar in July this year.

Mr Bolton, interviewed on BBC 2's *Newsnight* last night, said: "My decision to leave was a logical decision, a decision of the head. My

decision to come back was a decision of the heart."

As an Anglo-Catholic, Mr Bolton believed that the Church of England was part of the one, universal catholic church and that it was not, therefore, entitled to take on its own the decision to ordain women priests. "The important thing was for me to remain part of the catholic church. That was the question then: where could I be a catholic?"

But he continued: "When I arrived in the Roman Catholic Church, my heart said I belonged to the Church of England. I belonged with people I'd grown up with, learnt the faith with,

taught the faith to, that I'd loved, that I'd cared for as a priest. These people mattered to me, and mattered to me more than I think I knew, and perhaps I mattered to them more than I understood, too."

In total, 391 Anglican clergy have resigned over women priests. Of these, 221 became Roman Catholics, 22 Orthodox and nine joined the Free churches. Most of the others are thought to have remained in the Anglican church, although not serving as clergy.

An Anglican clergyman who resigned over the issue could receive up to £100,000 over ten years in

hardship payments from the Church Commissioners, although payments would cease if he found paid employment elsewhere.

The revelations come as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, pays his second visit to the Pope at the Vatican. The Pope agreed to allow converted clergy to enjoy a fast-track to ordination in the Catholic Church, although Cardinal Basil Hume, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, acknowledged at the time that not all the new converts to Roman Catholicism would be able to accept the difference between the two Churches.

Pope and Carey appeal for unity to end 'sad separation'

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury yesterday made a joint appeal for "full unity" between the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions, in an attempt to end what the Pope called "this sad separation".

Dr George Carey, holding the first of two meetings with the Pope in the Vatican, affirmed "the absolute commitment both of myself personally and also of the Anglican Communion to the full, visible unity of God's Church".

But the two Church leaders, who are to hold private talks tomorrow in the Vatican without interpreters or officials, avoided any direct reference to divisive issues such as the Anglican ordination of women priests. Officials said the "language of reconciliation"

was warmer than many had expected given the often bitter differences.

Dr Carey said: "We cannot undo overnight doctrinal differences and the bitterness that have resulted from the legacy of history," but noted a "convergence in faith and doctrine" since dialogue between the two churches began 30 years ago in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

Dr Carey met the Pope briefly in 1992 while visiting the Italian Church hierarchy. But this week is the first time a Pope and an Archbishop of Canterbury have met officially since 1989, when Dr Robert Runcie came to Rome. Dr Carey and the pontiff will jointly preside at Vespers tomorrow at San Gregorio Church, which contains the marble throne from which

Pope Gregory I sent St Augustine to Britain in 596 AD.

Addressing the Pope as "dear brother in Christ", Dr Carey said he had come to the "cradle of Western Christendom" in the name of the 70 million Anglicans around the world. He recalled being in Rome after the Pope's installation in 1978 and "the joy which welcomed the start of your papacy".

He praised the Pope's "evident commitment to Christian unity" as expressed in the encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* and in the Pope's travels abroad, including his visit to Britain in 1982, which Dr Carey said was "still remembered with great warmth and affection". The pontiff replied that praying alongside Dr Runcie in Canterbury Cathedral had been a "precious moment" and a "significant milestone".

Dr Carey said that in the run-up to the millennium, Church unity was vital for "a broken and divided world". The Pope called for "reconciliation and unity in a single communion of faith, life and mission. The task before us is to strengthen that bond until we reach the full unity that is Christ's will for us".

Yesterday evening the Archbishop addressed Rome's Anglican community at St Paul's within the Walls, a Victorian-era church now run by American Episcopalians.



Dr Carey with Cardinal Edward Cassidy of Australia

DPP's husband tells of knife mugging

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE husband of the Director of Public Prosecutions told a jury yesterday that a gang mugging left him "pouring with blood" near his home.

John Mills was stabbed between the ribs with a butterfly knife, hit over the head with a truncheon and punched. He managed to stagger to his front door before sinking to the floor in the hallway, where his wife, Barbara, raised the alarm. Surgeons saved his life after discovering that an artery had been cut and his liver lacerated. He lost nearly two pints of blood, Knightsbridge Crown Court was told.

Eduardo de la Cruz, 38, the alleged gang leader, and an unnamed 17-year-old youth, both from Marylebone, deny

wounding with intent in May last year, and the robbery of a wallet, credit cards and cash. Aftab Jafferjee, for the prosecution, said de la Cruz used a former police truncheon, while the knife was wielded by the unnamed youth.

Mr Mills, 58, a businessman, said a lack of parking spaces outside his home in Camden, north London, forced him to leave his car about 100 yards down the road. As he walked, he found himself surrounded by up to six youths.

"They started attacking me, punching me and one of them got me into a neck hold," he said. "I was punched around my head and shoulders. I think one of them, certainly, and perhaps others, were saying something like, 'Give me your money.' I decided it was not worthwhile being badly beaten up for the sum of

money I had in my wallet — £100 in £10 notes. I took it out from my inside jacket pocket and it was snatched from my hand."

He held on to his briefcase and the gang moved off down the street. "At the time I did not think my injuries were very severe. I had no idea that I had been stabbed. Somebody stopped in a car. She asked me if I was feeling all right and I said, 'Not too bad.' "The woman motorist indicated that he should look down. When he did, he said, "I could see that the blood was pouring out of me."

She offered to drive him to his house, but could not start her car. "So I made my own way the 100 yards or so to my front door," he recalled. While he lay on the hall floor, his wife dialled 999. The trial continues.

Renewing your home insurance in December or January?

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Libel trial told that BA report on rival airline chief played on his 'all-important image'

Irritated King 'linked Branson club with drugs'

BY ADRIAN LEE

A FORMER British Airways public relations executive told the High Court yesterday that Lord King of Warburton and other BA board members had become increasingly alarmed by the growing threat to the airline posed by Richard Branson, the head of Virgin.

Brian Basham said he had been asked to compile a report on Virgin. Lord King, the BA chairman, had provided information about a possible drugs problem at a nightclub owned by Mr Branson.

At the time, in 1991, Lord King and Colin Marshall, BA chief executive, were upset by Mr Branson's boasts that he would take almost a third of the transatlantic air market. But Mr Basham denied he had set out to smear or "trash" Virgin and said his report, presented to the BA board and leaked to selected journalists, was fair and balanced.

Mr Basham, 52, was giving evidence in his libel action against the author Martyn Gregory over passages in his book, *Dirty Tricks: British Airways' Secret War Against Virgin Atlantic*. He claims he is portrayed as a liar who masterminded a dirty tricks campaign against Virgin.

Mr Basham, from Hampstead, north-west London, said: "Some people in BA saw Richard Branson as an irritant because of the things he was saying about individuals.



Lord King, left, was angry at Virgin, Brian Basham said



Lord King was rather upset about remarks he had heard either from friends or the press. But the most serious matter was that Richard Branson made claims that he would win a very large proportion of transatlantic air traffic in a very small time — about 30 per cent in three or four years."

To compile his report, Mr Basham had employed "a very bright accountant" and a management consultant who read through five years of press cuttings and conducted 120 searches at Companies House to produce a business profile on Virgin.

The report included "the downside" of Virgin, he said. There was a section on the nightclub, Heaven, near Charing Cross in London, which had an unsavoury reputation. It was felt Japanese investors, important to Virgin,

might take a dim view. Heaven "seems to be a high risk in terms of his [Branson's] all-important image", concluded Mr Basham in his report. In the dossier were newspaper cuttings, including one from *The Sun*, headed, "Fiver for a drug trip to Heaven in Branson's club — we see pushers plying evil trade."

On one occasion, Lord King had visited the offices of British Aerospace in the Strand, not far from the club. Mr Basham said: "Lord King told me that when he went to visit, Sir Ray Lygo [then the chief executive of BAE] apologised to him because Lord King could not get in the VIP entrance because of large mounds of rubbish bags which Ray Lygo said Westminster Council refused to move because the refuse people thought they might contain infected needles." The

rubbish was from the Branson nightclub.

Asked by his counsel, Patrick Milmo, QC, why he included this information in his report, Mr Basham told the jury: "This was a report primarily to the board of British Airways. This information had been provided by the chairman. It seemed appropriate to include it. I believed it to be entirely true."

Mr Milmo asked Mr Basham: "Did you think you were a part in a smear campaign, that you were trashing Richard Branson and Virgin Atlantic?"

"No, of course not," Mr Basham said. "I was questioning his claims. I think it was a fair and balanced report. That was the brief I gave my employees and consultant and that is what we produced."

The jury was played a tape recording, made secretly by a journalist, Chris Hutchins, at a meeting with Mr Basham in October 1991. The conversation was about Virgin and Mr Branson and included remarks about the "moral danger" Mr Branson faced because of his links with the Heaven club. Mr Basham told the jury it was "not inconceivable" the club might be raided for drugs. He said he was merely explaining that unfavourable publicity about the club might give Mr Branson re-financing problems.

The hearing continues.



Richard Branson modelling one of the wedding outfits in Virgin's latest venture

Close shave in fashion as Virgin bride is unveiled

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

IT COULD be a test of the modern man. After a close shave, he has to show a stiff upper lip, a noble chin, yet still display a sensitive side.

In an age when the number of famous beard wearers seems to be thinning, Richard Branson flamboyantly joined the ranks of the newly shorn yesterday by appearing on a catwalk, dressed in drag, to launch his latest venture, a wedding shop.

This new blow to the cause of hirsute men had a practical reason. Within three weeks, the Virgin boss hopes to get under way on his much-postponed circumnavigation of the world in a hot-air balloon and needs his oxygen mask to be a snug fit.

He has been cultivating his facial growth since he was 16, 30 years ago. He said: "Me without a beard is like a dog without a bone. But my wife is keen for me to grow it back, so I expect it will appear again quite quickly."

The move caused alarm in the beard lobby. "I feel very let down," said Jerry Hayes, the Tory MP who has recently had his own beard trimmed into a goatee. "There is rampant beardism in this country. I experimented with shaving mine off two years ago, but my children screamed."

Mike Gatting, the former England cricket captain, has shaved his off after a bet with

his team during an England team tour in Australia. "I said I'd do it if we beat Victoria and we did. But I'm going to start growing it again," he said glumly.

These are just the latest disappearing beards. Jimmy Hill's chin lost its trademark fuzz 13 years ago. The comedian Billy Connolly has long been sans whiskers. John Gummer's career reportedly improved when he took note of Margaret Thatcher's reputed dislike of beards.

Traditionally Labour has been a much hairier political party — with Robin Cook, Frank Dobson and David Blunkett in the front line — but it emerged earlier this year that new Labour was advising candidates to sport a clean-cut look. Peter Mandel-

son and Ken Livingstone had already shaved off their moustaches. Alistair Darling, of Labour's Treasury team, had planned to shave off his white whiskers, but kept them after pressure from his wife. "I had already had all my election photographs taken — people wouldn't recognise me," he said.

Many men go through a hairy stage of course. The Duke of Wales returned from a trip to Canada sporting a beard in 1975, and his brother, the Duke of York, turned hirsute in the Forces ten years later. There's always a moment of self-consciousness when the beard is shorn and people can't quite make out why you look different.

Except in Mr Branson's case, of course.



The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York went through their bearded stages ten years apart



Tide turns in fight over the beach

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A VETERAN fighter on the beaches was celebrating yesterday when her two main opponents threw in the towel after a battle lasting nearly 20 years.

Bridget Gubbins took on a sand and gravel company and the nuclear industry to preserve her favourite stretch of beach at Druridge Bay, Northumberland.

Magnox Electric gave up and said it wanted to sell almost 300 acres at Druridge Bay, which had been earmarked as a site for a nuclear power station since the late 1970s.

Then, Mrs Gubbins and her fellow campaigners heard that Ready Mixed Concrete had decided to stop extracting sand from a one-mile stretch of the eight-mile bay, giving up a 45-year option on further planning applications.

The nuclear threat receded with electricity privatisation in 1989, so the campaign switched to saving the sand. About 15 million tonnes has been taken since the 1960s, threatening to ruin one of the North East's most popular tourist beaches.

Mrs Gubbins, 52, said the Druridge Bay Campaign became a major part of her life after she and her husband,

Bill, moved from the United States in 1976. "When the threat of a nuclear power station emerged in the late 1970s it was a most awful blow. The only course open to us was to fight it. So through the childhood of our four children we were campaigning, but after the magnificent developments of the past week it all seems worthwhile."

"The lowest point for us was in 1984 when test drilling found the bay would be suitable for two or three power stations and the former Central Electricity Generating Board began buying up land and properties."

The only remaining problem is that about half a mile of formerly sandy beach has been left an expanse of rock and mud. "We just hope that in time the sea will build up new sand," Mrs Gubbins said.

She said she took her hat off to her opponents: "We have to admire them for standing down, faced with such widespread protests. In the case of the sand extraction, RMC had the legal right to continue, but the moral issue got to them."

She added: "Effort is still needed to sort out the bay's future. We want it to become an environmental treasure."

Rothschild leaves £18m in will after suicide

BY LIN JENKINS

AMSCHEL ROTHSCHILD, the heir to the banking dynasty who committed suicide in Paris in July, left an estate valued at more than £18 million. Mr Rothschild, 41, who left a widow, Anita, 38, and three children, Kate, 13, Alice, 12, and James, 11, was found hanged by his bathrobe cord in his hotel bathroom.

At an inquest in August, Paul Knapman, the Westminster Coroner, concluded that his death resulted from depression, possibly caused by the death of his mother.

Mr Rothschild left the bulk of his estate, net value £18,542,935 (£18,864,699 gross) to relatives.

At the time of his death Mr Rothschild, of Kensington, west London, who also lived with his family on an estate in Suffolk, was in Paris to chair a meeting of Rothschild Asset Management.

About 600 mourners attended his funeral at the Liberal Jewish Cemetery in Willesden, north London. Among them were William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and Bill Wymann of the Rolling Stones.

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GPs would lead Labour's attack on NHS waste



By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR pledged yesterday to top the Government's spending plans for the NHS by cutting bureaucracy by 90 per cent and putting GPs in charge of almost the entire hospital budget.

In a rare spending commitment, Chris Smith, the Shadow Health Secretary, said Labour would match the Government's promise of an extra £1.6 billion for the NHS next year — a 2.9 per cent increase in real terms — but make more money available for patients by cutting out "swaths of wasteful bureaucratic

procedure". The keystone is the increased role for GPs. They would largely take over the running of the hospital budget, worth £23 billion next year, from health authorities.

Mr Smith told NHS managers that Labour would also end the competitive internal market and get rid of two-tier care. But he surprised experts by predicting that the introduction of GP commissioning and a switch to longer-term funding agreements with hospitals would reduce the amount of contracts in the NHS to less than one tenth of their present level.

Labour has estimated that the internal market introduced by the

NHS reforms in 1991 costs £1.5 billion a year to run. Labour said it would save £100 million on administration costs in the first year. The British Medical Association described the promised 90 per cent cut in paperwork as a "huge claim".

Annual contracts with hospitals, which Mr Smith described as insane, would be replaced with three to five-year funding agreements. The changes would be accomplished over two to three years, Mr Smith said he wanted to move from "a market system based on hundreds of thousands of individual transactions all happening in the uncoordinated and contradictory

fashion" to a devolved system where decisions are taken close to the patient — in other words, by GPs.

However, GP fundholding, under which individual practices hold their own budgets for non-urgent hospital treatment, was not suitable for all GPs and had introduced inequity through the development of a two-tier service.

In its place, groups of GPs covering between 50,000 and 150,000 people would take control, leaving the local health authority with a planning and monitoring role and a much-reduced budget.

In a marked softening of Labour's previously hostile attitude to GP

fundholding, Mr Smith said existing fundholders could be allowed to continue operating their own limited hospital budgets by agreement with the local GP commissioning group so long as they observed the group's overall aims and did not operate a two-tier service.

Mr Smith said the new structure was a way of involving all GPs, harnessing their "dynamism and commitment" but avoiding current "fragmentation, inequity and excessive management overheads". Instead of inviting competing bids for their custom, from hospitals, they would draw up agreements on a "collaborative, negotiated basis".

However, it is unclear what leverage the GP commissioning groups would have over poor-performing hospitals. Mr Smith said they should use other ways of forcing improvements.

The National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts welcomed the greater involvement of GPs but said they must be accountable, with health authorities given powers to intervene if problems arose. Rüdian Morris, chairman of the National Association of Fundholding GPs, said the proposals would mean the death of fundholding.

Largest skin graft leaves woman with new outlook

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE face and neck of a woman badly scarred by burns has been restored by a pioneering skin graft.

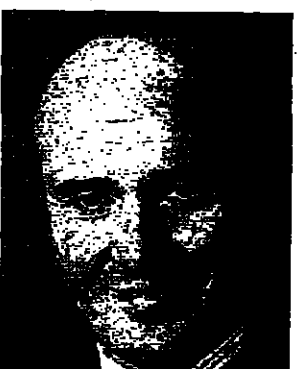
Andrea Trembeth, 49, was treated at the Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead, West Sussex, by consultant plastic surgeon Nicholas Parkhouse, who took an 11lb-15in piece of skin from her side. He chose to take the full thickness of skin, the largest such graft carried out in Britain.

Plastic surgeons normally take only the top layer of skin, because this enables the skin at the donor site to regenerate. The drawback is that these thin shavings of skin, known as split skin grafts, have a tendency to shrink, resulting in tightness in the scar tissue. The result can be unsightly as well as uncomfortable.

Mrs Trembeth, who was burnt in a house fire, had had

conventional skin grafts but was left in discomfort and with obvious scarring on her face and neck. Mr Parkhouse offered her the chance of a full-thickness skin graft, pioneered in the US in the 1980s by Joel Feldman of the Shriners Burns Institute in Boston.

Full-thickness skin grafts, which are less, and therefore provide a much more supple



Parkhouse: delighted that operation worked

result. But the operation is very time-consuming, and the risk of failure "almost unthinkable". Mr Parkhouse said, because first all the existing area of graft has to be removed.

The operation took two days. On the first day, all the scar tissue from the lower face and neck was removed in an operation lasting six hours, leaving a bed of tissue with no scarring and no bleeding.

The following day, in an operation lasting 12 hours, the full-thickness graft was taken from Mrs Trembeth's side and used to reconstruct the damaged area. The area of her side from which the skin had been removed was repaired with skin shavings from her legs. Mrs Trembeth was under anaesthetic throughout the two days.

The operation, details of which were reported at the winter meeting of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons in London yesterday,

ended with Mrs Trembeth in a plaster cast to immobilise her. "The danger is that if the jaws and face are allowed to move there is a shearing force between the face and the new skin which damages the developing blood vessels," Mr Parkhouse said. "Then the graft fails. To prevent that Mrs Trembeth had to be immobilised, her jaw wired up, and fed through a tube." She was in intensive care for a week.

Mrs Trembeth had her operation 18 months ago. "She was absolutely delighted and I was delighted that it worked," said Mr Parkhouse, who has done a similar graft since. "It isn't appropriate for every patient," he said. "It causes an area of heavy scarring where the donor skin is removed, but that can be tolerated if the result is to improve the appearance of the face. That can be a big psychological help to patients."

Healing power of the grubby dressing

By NIGEL HAWKES

MAGGOTS have saved a man's leg from amputation in a clinical trial of an ancient, if stomach-turning, technique.

The 83-year-old man had three large ulcers in the same leg as well as a lung infection and heart failure. In a treatment for patients who are unfit for surgery, doctors applied sterile, green bottle fly larvae to the wounds and covered them with dressing. The maggots removed dead tissue and ingested bacteria, without attacking healthy tissue. The patient's only complaint was a tickling sensation as they went about their business.

Three days later the maggots were removed using a suction technique. Instead of an amputation, the man ultimately needed only a skin graft.

Kenneth Graham, of Dundee Royal Infirmary and Middlesex Hospital, London, said yesterday: "Maggots are very effective in cleaning up wounds. They eat up all the dead tissue, they remove the odour and they rapidly

produce young blood vessels that bring nutrition to the wound."

Six people took part in the trial. Mr Graham said there were no major side-effects, the patients' revulsion being the main problem. Typically between 150 and 200 maggots were used. A hundred would eat up to 15g of dead tissue a day, growing up to 20 times their initial size.

The healing power of maggots has long been known. Interest in their use is being revived with many bacteria having become resistant to antibiotics.



Andrea Trembeth, whose face and neck were remodelled with skin from her side

Surgeons put backs into breast surgery

By A STAFF REPORTER

WOMEN who face disfigurement after operations for breast cancer were offered a solution yesterday. A technique has been developed that involves replacing the missing area of breast with skin and muscle from the patient's back.

Recently there has been a trend away from removing the breast completely to cutting out the tumours. But doctors realise that the resulting disfigurement can be more upsetting than a mastectomy.

The new technique involves a cancer surgeon and plastic surgeon working together. In the first trials in Britain at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, patients were delighted to find that they were able to keep their figures. About 40 patients have had the surgery since 1994, their ages ranging from 36 to 72.

Speaking at a news conference organised by the British Association of Plastic Surgeons, C.C. Koo, who is pioneering the treatment, said: "The idea of just removing the lump has caught on because people feel they won't lose their breast. But quite a number of these lump operations have a problem with scarring, deformity and alteration in size."

"This treatment is effective, simple, involves few complications, and the bottom line is that you have very happy patients."

Gulf War sickness linked to stress

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

STRESS may have made some Gulf War soldiers more likely to fall ill after taking anti-nerve gas agents, research in Israel suggests.

A team from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Israeli Defence Forces Medical Corps have found that stress increases the amount of drugs able to cross the so-called blood-brain barrier. In experiments with mice, stress greatly increased the amount of a chemical that could cross, the team reports in *Nature Medicine*.

The study began after it was found that Gulf War veterans suffered short-term neurological problems, such as insomnia and nervousness, after taking the anti-nerve gas agent pyridostigmine.

One of the authors of the study, Dr Hermosa Soreq, said: "Pyridostigmine penetrates the brain rather effectively under stress conditions." The finding suggests that stress may multiply the effect of the drugs and raises questions about dosage.

Sixth person dies in E. coli outbreak

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A SIXTH person died of suspected *E. coli* food poisoning in Scotland yesterday, as it emerged that the butcher at the centre of the outbreak ignored warnings and sold suspect meat after the health alert.

John M. Barr & Son, of Wishaw, supplied a party with turkey, boiled ham and roast beef on Saturday, November 23, despite being told to remove all cooked meats from sale the night before, Lanarkshire Health Board said.

Twenty-two guests out of 104 who attended the 18th birthday celebration more than a week ago have symptoms of *E. coli* 0157. One is in hospital while another six guests have yet to be traced. Strathclyde Police are investigating.

The 72-year-old woman who died yesterday in Monklands Hospital, Airdrie, after being admitted to hospital on November 24, has not been named. A total of 168 people have now been confirmed as being infected with *E. coli* 0157, most of them in Lanarkshire. It is feared that as many as one in ten may develop kidney problems.

Fifty-eight people are in

hospital and 25 are seriously ill, including four children in Glasgow's Yorkhill Hospital who are still receiving dialysis for kidney damage, as are three adults.

Professor Hugh Pennington, who is heading the Scottish Office inquiry into the epidemic, has been asked by Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, to prepare his report by Christmas.

Legal aid has been granted to seven children, aged from three to seven, to prepare a ground-breaking legal action over *E. coli* 0157 against the Government (Frances Gibb writes). The children, who suffered food poisoning and kidney problems in different incidents in England, say it failed to give warning of the dangers of undercooked beef and the risks of the bacterium. They will also be suing variously McDonald's Restaurants, a firm of meat suppliers and an abattoir.

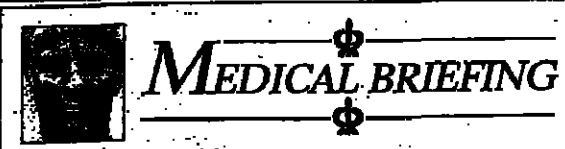
A spokesman for McDonald's said: "The danger from *E. coli* is well known. We would like to reassure our customers that all McDonald's products are cooked to exacting standards and to the highest specification."

Cream offers sporting chance

MARGARET GOODWIN is an ace bowls player, but her chances of success in the national women's competition, in which she used to star, has been blighted by her eczematous feet.

Her condition is aggravated by contact with nylon. Like many eczema sufferers, Mrs Goodwin, 50, from Saltash in Cornwall, has to wear absorbent, non-irritating textiles on her feet for bowls, old-fashioned cotton socks would be ideal if only she were allowed to wear them.

The ruling body for English women's indoor bowls championships is adamant. Either Mrs Goodwin wears nylon tights or stockings or she takes no part in its competitions. The committee is unmoved by dermatologists' letters explaining that after con-



tact with nylon, Mrs Goodwin's feet swell, ooze and itch. The National Eczema Society is outraged.

There is hope for Mrs Goodwin. Treatment is usually with steroid creams, but thinning can be a serious side-effect when the creams are used for any length of time. Damage is pronounced if the skin is already thin, as on the soles of the feet. The skin may develop prominent veins and a rash. However, research has shown that a new potent steroid cream, Civalite (fluticasone), does

not cause such serious thinning as others of the type. In a clinical trial volunteers applying fluticasone had lost 3 per cent of their skin thickness after eight weeks. In other experiments the older potent steroid creams have caused a loss of between 15 to 22 per cent of thickness.

Another advantage is that fluticasone need be applied only once daily. It would not normally be recommended for long-term use on thin skin but might be used for long enough to let Mrs Goodwin wear nylons, and win.

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How whisperers got it wrong on 'wobbly' Heseltine

By Philip Webster and James Landale

THE Tory Euro-sceptics suggested through a whispering campaign that Michael Heseltine was "wobbly" on changing the Government's wait-and-see policy on a single currency.

They encouraged the notion that Kenneth Clarke was the only obstacle but yesterday Mr Heseltine's words were anything but wobbly. By ruling out any change to the Government's position during this Parliament "and during the election campaign", Mr Heseltine went further even than the Chancellor, the Cabinet's leading pro-European.

The sceptics' attempt, via *The Daily Telegraph*, to force a change of mind by Mr Major had blown up in their faces. Until yesterday there was a chance that Mr Major could reopen the issue. Now the armlock of Mr Clarke and Mr Heseltine on Mr Major was tighter than ever.

It had all seemed relatively simple on April 3 when Mr Major, having at last persuaded Mr Clarke to accept that the Tories would hold a referendum if the Cabinet decided to join a monetary union, said that the Tories would be keeping their options open at the election.

That was a position Mr Major hoped to use to keep his party together right up until polling day. No such luck. Towards the end of the summer the argument was raging again. Mr Major feared that his party conference at Bournemouth would be dominated by Europe. He took the unusual step of writing an article for *The Times* on October 5 which again spelt out the advantages of the options-open policy, emphasising that Britain needed to be on the inside negotiating, irrespective of whether it ever joined.

His play succeeded. But behind the scenes, Cabinet ministers were briefing that, maybe early next year, they would try to reopen the argument. The need for the Tories to take a more sceptical position was heightened, in their eyes, by Labour's decision to match the referendum pledge. But on Monday *The Daily*

Telegraph reported that Mr Major had decided that Britain could not go into a single currency in the first wave and would be trying to convince Mr Clarke to drop his opposition so the Tories could fight the election on that stance.

Mr Clarke would have none of it, denouncing the idea in Brussels on Monday as preposterous.

Downing Street, inadvertently it appears, helped the story to run by saying that the Government would "take a decision on EMU when it was appropriate to take a decision". It did not say that the decision would not be taken until after the election. This offered the sceptics hope. When they looked again at Mr Major's article in *The Times* they noted that it, too, did not specifically rule out a change before the election. Late on Monday, however, *The Times* learnt from authoritative Downing Street sources that the sceptics were barking up the wrong tree. Mr Major was not about to change his position.

Yesterday morning after more bad headlines Downing Street sought to end talk of a split with Mr Clarke. It pointed to a parliamentary answer from him on October 16 which said the decision on the single currency was not one "for the lifetime of the current Parliament".

It was almost enough. But even then the textual analysts saw the escape hatch. Ruling out the lifetime of the present Parliament did not, they said, totally prevent the Tories changing their line after the dissolution of Parliament and in time for the election.

Mr Heseltine then went to work on BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*. Mr Major later confirmed both that the April 5 statement and Mr Heseltine's view was the unequivocal government position. Any change in the wait-and-see policy was now far more remote than it had ever been.

Leading article, page 17



Beckett given bigger role beyond Brown's shadow

By Arthur Leathley, Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR has intervened in a frontbench "turf war" to give Margaret Beckett a high-profile role in winning business support for Labour in the run-up to the general election.

The Labour leader has acted to prevent Mrs Beckett being marginalised in her trade and industry job by Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, who is accused by senior figures of dominating policymaking. Senior frontbenchers have suggested that her portfolio is in danger of being taken over by Mr Brown's increasingly powerful Treasury team, although she has fought off their advances into trade and industry policy areas.

Senior Labour figures acknowledge that Mrs Beckett, who took over as acting party leader after John Smith's death, is a valuable asset who

has been underused in recent months. Her experience as a former government minister and the backbench support she received in the party deputy leadership contest are seen as important reasons for giving her an enhanced role over the coming months.

Although leadership sources dismiss as "far-fetched" suggestions that her higher profile is aimed primarily at attracting more women voters, they acknowledge that the party needs to make better use of its top-ranking women. Alongside Harriet Harman, Clare Short and Ann Taylor, Mrs Beckett is seen as important in emphasising Labour's commitment to promoting able women to senior positions.

Mrs Beckett's eight-strong trade and industry team will play an increasingly promi-

nent part in wooing business leaders and countering Tory pre-election claims to be the party that protects Britain's companies. A frontbencher said: "We are realistic and know that big business is not going to run to Labour, but we are neutralising claims that we are a threat to business."

Mrs Beckett and her colleagues, in particular Geoff Hoon, will co-ordinate efforts to ensure that business leaders are given a better understanding of Labour policy by means of meetings and speeches through the winter.

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons from 9.30am, backbench debates from 2.30pm, trade and industry questions; Firearms (Amendment) Bill, remaining aspects; backbench debate on Kent Capital Gains tax; In the Lords: debate on economic and monetary union; Digby at Work Bill, second reading.

However you read the polls, Tories have much to do

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Four points up one month, three points down the next. The opinion polls seem to be painting a confusing picture. One month the Tories seem at last to be mounting a strong recovery: the next, Labour is confirming its huge lead. Indeed, even during the same month, one poll may be seen as good news for the Tories, and the next, a few days later, as good for Labour. The truth, as almost always with polls, is less dramatic than the headlines, though no more comforting for the Tories.

Some of the contrast reflects differences in the way polls are compiled. Pollsters disagree about the best method of producing a sample representative of the adult population. MORI, which conducts the regular polls for *The Times*, interviews on a face-to-face basis, while ICM, which carries out polls for *The Guardian*, has switched to telephone polling.

More significant are the adjustments that some pollsters, notably ICM and NOP, make to the figures to take account of the so-called spiral of silence, the alleged reluctance of some voters to admit voting Tory when the party is generally unpopular. Some elderly voters, more Tory than younger people, are reluctant to answer questions. NOP and ICM adjust the don't knows in relation to past votes or to the party with which they most closely identify. MORI and Gallup do not. Adjusted polls have put the Tories three or four points higher than unadjusted ones, and have reduced Labour's ratings by a similar amount. That can make a big difference to the headline Labour lead.

Each of the four main national polls has shown big variations on an unadjusted basis, with alternating gains and losses for the main parties from month to month. This does not mean that the polls are wrong. There is an inevitable margin of error in all samples which produces some fluctuations in the figures. More to the point, people change their mind.

As Robert Worcester of MORI writes in the latest

issue of *British Public Opinion*, "for many people, political judgments as to which party to support are not deeply held convictions based on their values and thought-through attitudes, but upon the political opinions of the day, blown about in the winds of the media and the appearances of political leaders on the box". Such external political stimuli are always higher in the autumn with the party conference season and the Queen's Speech, reinforced this year by the intensification of campaigning ahead of the general election.

On this basis some of the recent fluctuations are less surprising and reflect the short-term impact of, say, good publicity about a particular event, which is then reversed, partially or wholly, the following month. Nonetheless, some trends are discernible. Tory support was in the 24 to 27 per cent range at the beginning of October before rising to around 29 to 33 per cent by the end of the month, and staying there during first half of November.

By contrast, Labour moved from a range of 54 to 57 per cent down to between 48 and 54 per cent by early-to-mid November. A couple of polls, including one from MORI, were just outside that range. The main apparently deviant poll from NOP in mid-November put the Tories on 26 per cent and Labour on 56 per cent. Unadjusted figures from the latest ICM poll put Labour on the top end of the recent range at 53 per cent with the Tories below the bottom end at 27 per cent.

The main lessons are to compare results from the same pollsters and ignore small variations which may reflect temporary blips. What matters is underlying trends and these currently point to a slow, patchy, Tory recovery which has yet really to undermine Labour's commanding position so near an election.

PETER RIDDELL

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Return on Sales	12.9%	12.0%	up 0.9
Earnings per Share (pence)	24.0	19.2	up 25.0%
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Russian pit strike alarms Kremlin

Coalminers demand back pay and change of leaders

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S vast coal-mining industry virtually ground to a halt yesterday, after hundreds of thousands of unpaid miners went on an indefinite strike demanding back wages and the dismissal of the Government.

In one of the most serious post-Soviet industrial actions, about 400,000 miners from the coal-producing areas of the Russian Far East, Siberia, northern and southern Russia, closed about 188 of the country's 258 pits.

The stoppage was being taken very seriously by the Kremlin, not only because the lack of coal could cause power and heating cuts in the middle of winter, but also because the miners had for the first time included political demands in their list of grievances.

"The strike is huge, probably the biggest, involving about 80 per cent of all Russian miners," Vitali Budko, the head of the Independent Union of Coal Miners, said.

The trade union wants the Government to quit because it is unable to guarantee the civil rights of the people and unable to pay wages. The resig-



Russian miners rally yesterday in Novokusnetsk, Siberia, as they shut down 188 pits, fuelling fears of heating cuts in the depth of winter

nation of the Government is not our aim, it is our cry of despair, to make them negotiate with us."

The tactic appeared to be working last night as Aleksandr Livshits, the Finance Minister, ordered emergency payments to be made to cover the Government's 1.5 trillion rouble (£177 million) debt to the industry.

Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, attending the Organisation for Security and

Co-operation in Europe summit in Lisbon, may fly directly to the Kuzbass region of Siberia, Russia's largest coal-producing region, where some of the most militant miners are on strike.

Aleksandr Trutnev, the editor of the daily Kuzbass newspaper in the regional capital, Kemerovo, said the mood had turned very ugly at the mines, where nearly 90 per cent of the pits were shut because many miners had not been paid in

months. He added that there were fears that the stoppages could extend to the power industry workers and that the entire region could face heating and power cuts with temperatures presently at -22C (-7.6F).

"The situation is very threatening," Mr Trutnev said. "Aside from the usual demands for wages and more subsidies, the miners are now including political issues. This is the first time they have

demanding the sacking of the Government."

The Kuzbass region has used its powerful labour force with success in the past. The miners led the first serious stoppage in July 1989 against the former Soviet authorities and subsequently supported Boris Yeltsin against Communist hardliners in 1991.

This time, however, there is no question of support for the Kremlin leader, who is expected back in office any day now

to tackle the pressing problems of unpaid wages not only to the miners but to the military, the public sector and subsidised industries.

Nikolai Kozlovsky, a member of the strike committee in the Kuzbass region of Prokopyevsk, said the time for talking was over. "If our economic demands are not met, we must undertake such political actions that will shake the whole of Russia," he said in a warning.

Berlusconi says single currency will bring down Prodi

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

SILVIO BERLUSCONI, the leader of Italy's Centre-Right opposition, predicted yesterday that the Government of Professor Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister, would fail to meet the Maastricht criteria for economic and monetary union (EMU) and would collapse next year.

He offered to replace the centre-left coalition with a "government of national unity" to guide Italy into an integrated Europe and oversee constitutional reform. Signor Berlusconi told his Forza Italia party that the Prodi Government, which took office in May vowing to last five years, would fall next spring.

Signor Prodi has said he will resign if the tough 1997 budget fails to "get us into Europe". Tensions within the centre-left coalition over the budget became increasingly fraught this week, after the lira re-entered the exchange-rate mechanism.

Lamberto Dini, the Foreign Minister and leader of the centrist Italian Renewal Party, accused Signor Prodi of bowing to the hard-left Rifondazione Comunista by failing to tackle deep structural problems in the economy as a result of overspending on pensions and welfare benefits. The Government depends on Rifondazione for its majority in parliament and has proposed tax increases, including an unpopular one-off "Euro tax", to meet the Maastricht criteria.

Signor Berlusconi said Signor Prodi would have to risk further public anger and impose another "mini-budget" when it became clear the Government was going to fall short of the EMU targets.

Signor Prodi, who faces accusations of abuse of office, insisted his coalition was "robust" and promised to reimburse the Euro tax once Italy was "safely inside Europe".

Row over enclave flares at summit

A row between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh enclave threatened to block the summit communiqué of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe yesterday (Michael Evans writes). However, the 54-nation gathering in Lisbon agreed to set aside the dispute and ended their two-day summit with a pledge that all countries should enjoy security and peace in the 21st century.

Chechen contest

Grozny: Colonel Aslan Maskhadov, leader of Chechnya's independence fighters who have humiliated the Russian Army, said he planned to run in the presidential election expected in January. (Reuters)

Hostage talks

Srinagar: Two FBI officers met Kashmir police to discuss the fate of four Westerners — two of them British — kidnapped 17 months ago, officials said. A British diplomat joined the meeting. (AFP)

Afghan aid plea

Kabul: International aid organisations have launched an appeal to raise \$133 million (£79 million) for emergency humanitarian relief, including mine clearance and medical aid, in Afghanistan. (Reuters)

Kurds evacuated

Ankara: The American evacuation of nearly 4,500 Kurdish aid workers and their families from northern Iraq to Guam in the Pacific will begin today, a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman said. (AFP)

Unseen force

Milan: Police may charge 50 so-called fortune-tellers with fraud after surprise raids on homes and offices across Italy. The flying squad said: "They didn't predict being investigated." (Reuters)

Britain vows to pursue Bosnia war criminals

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

INDICTED war criminals still at large in Bosnia were sent a warning yesterday that their days of freedom may soon be over.

The failure to hand over the vast majority of indicted war criminals to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague has been an embarrassment for the West, which is committed to implementing all aspects of the Dayton peace accord.

That included a pledge to deal with war crimes. Yesterday, on the eve of a Bosnia peace implementation conference in London to map out the next stages of the reconciliation and reconstruction programme, a senior British official said next year there would have to be a much greater focus on arresting indicted criminals and providing resources for the Hague tribunal.

So far 74 individuals have been indicted for war crimes, covering 17 separate incidents, including the alleged massacre at Srebrenica. Those indicted include General Ratko

Mladic, who recently quit as commander of the Bosnian Serb army. Only one person has been convicted, Drazen Erdemovic, sentenced last week to ten years' jail for taking part in the massacre of 1,200 Muslims near Srebrenica. Six others are in custody.

To handle the complex investigations, the tribunal has a budget this year of \$35 million (£21 million). The budget has risen steadily from \$276,000 in 1993.

The London talks, involving 56 countries, come amid increasing pressure on President Milosevic, the Serbi-

an leader. Yesterday five supreme court judges joined the chorus of opposition, as 10,000 students began a sixteenth straight day of Belgrade demonstrations over disputed local elections. Undeterred, Mr Milosevic shut two student-run radio stations.

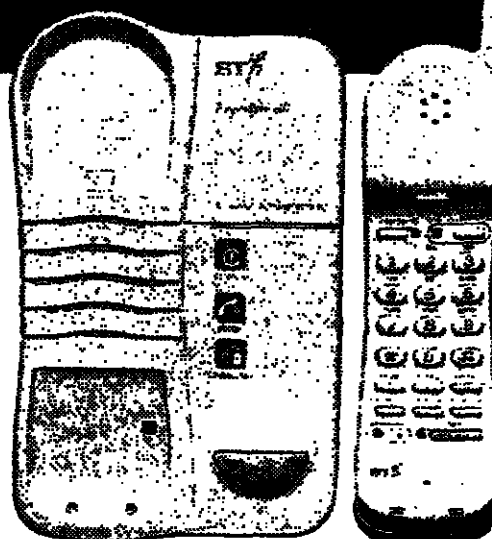
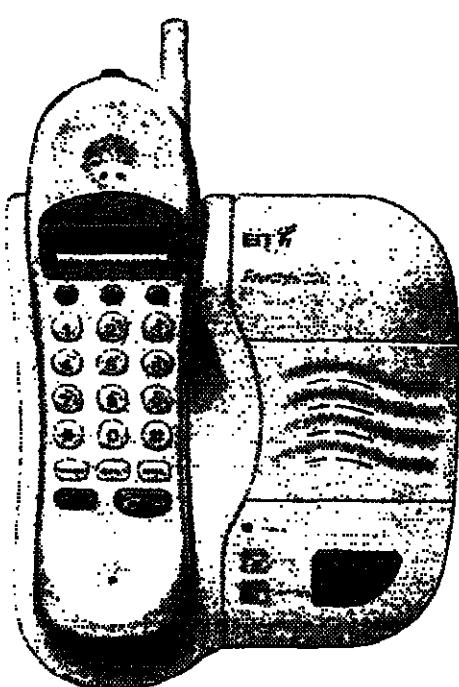
Chemical weapons: Bosnian Muslims produced chemical weapons during the war in Bosnia but stopped making them early this year after the fighting ended, according to *Jane's Intelligence Review*.

Letters, page 17

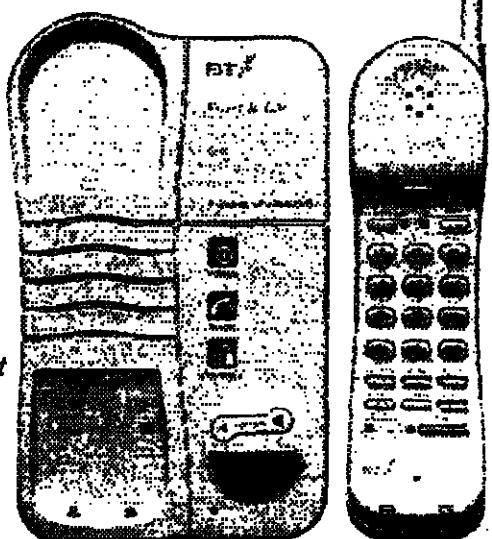
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US documents show Nazis hid £1bn loot in Argentina

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

NAZIS secretly sent more than \$1 billion to Argentina in the last month of the Second World War in Europe as they scoured the world for safe havens for their funds, according to newly declassified war-time documents.

The American papers, sent from the US Embassy in Buenos Aires to the Secretary of State in Washington and held in the National Archives, have been released by the World Jewish Congress, which has been making vigorous use of American freedom of information laws to extract clues to the trail of Nazi funds.

Jewish efforts to trace the huge wealth confiscated from Holocaust victims have gathered pace in the past year after congressional hearings and US legal challenges by victims' relatives to banks in several countries.

Argentina's large Jewish community believes that much of the looted wealth found its way to that country.

Argentina was a safe haven for Nazis such as Adolf Eichmann, one of the architects of the Holocaust, and former SS Captain Erich Priebke, extradited last year to Italy.

The papers, released on Monday, include a letter from Henry Morgenthau, the Treasury Secretary, in February 1945 saying that Nazis had penetrated the Argentine economy. The letter to the acting Secretary of State said: "Argentina is not only a likely refuge for Nazi criminals but also has been and still is the focal point of Nazi financial and economic activity in this hemisphere."

According to estimates in the report, the Nazis invested \$500 million in Argentine companies, \$300 million in farms and ranches, \$105 million in banks and \$40 million in insurance companies. The estimates do not include cash sent through European middlemen or from the German Government. The estimates

were based on "financial reports and conjecture" according to the documents, because American officials were not in contact with Argentine authorities who could confirm the figures.

However, last week the Argentine Central Bank gave officials from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles five volumes of records on funds transferred from banks in Switzerland, Spain and Portugal to Argentina between 1939 and 1949. The centre is one of the most active Jewish groups in America pursuing the question of funds looted by the Nazis. Zurich's Switzerland's official report on whether its citizens pocketed unclaimed wealth of Holocaust victims as compensation for property nationalised in Eastern Europe, due today, has been delayed for about a week. Thomas Borer, head of the report task force, said yesterday. (Reuters)



Brad Rodgers, third from right, winner of the Miss Victoria Fundraiser competition, poses with other contestants in Melbourne. His victory qualifies him for the finals of the Miss Australia contest - the first time a man has qualified for the contest. Mr Rodgers, 27, raised more than \$100,000 (£47,000) for

Victory for gender blender

the Spastic Society of Australia, which cares about \$35 million a year from the contest for its cerebral palsy centres. Mr Rodgers, a department store manager, said he entered the competition after helping other con-

testants to raise money. He hoped his participation would help to dispel the award's lingering reputation as a beauty pageant and encourage other men to enter. "I'm not here to make a political state-

ment for blokes, but I do hope I'll be the first of many more to come. I'm not into that gender specific stuff." The Miss Australia contest, an Australian institution in the 1950s and 1960s, was dropped in the late 1980s in the face of criticism that it was exploitative and patronising. (Reuters)

Australian support for republic at 55 per cent

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

MOVES to declare Australia a republic strengthened yesterday after an opinion poll revealed that support for cutting royal ties with Britain had reached a new high level.

The Sydney Morning Herald-AGB McNair survey found 55 per cent favoured a republic, an increase of 4 per cent in just over a year.

The paper claimed that the departure of Paul Keating, the former Prime Minister, from office may have played a factor. He had championed the republican cause, but his anti-British venom and loudish parliamentary behaviour appeared to have damaged support for the idea.

"The Herald's poll yesterday. 'It is possible that the departure from public life of Mr Keating may be behind the boost in support.'"

What is significant is that a crucial majority of people in robust states now support the change - a fundamental requirement of a referendum. John Howard, the Prime Minister, will agree to a vote only if there are signs of huge public support. "It has got to be something that the bulk of the community are taken along with," the Liberal leader said this week.

But Mr Howard, who backs the monarchist tradition, is reluctant to give the matter priority for fear of unnecessarily dividing the nation. But the poll indicates that the mood is changing, even among the Liberal Party's conservative voters. The pressure on Mr Howard to hold a referendum before the turn of the century will be intense.

Sharks safe from Man the predator

FROM REUTERS IN SYDNEY

THE great white shark, demonised in the film Jaws, yesterday became a protected species off Australia's east coast, prompting calls for a worldwide hunting ban.

Despite its fearsome reputation, the great white, which can grow to 38ft and 25 tonnes, is not the man-eater of myth. A total of 527 shark attacks have been recorded in Australia since 1788, 184 of them fatal. The whaler shark has been responsible for most of these, according to John West, zoologist at Taronga Zoo in Sydney.

"Years of irrational hatred and indiscriminate hunting have taken their toll," Bob Martin, fisheries minister for New South Wales, said. Marine biologists estimate that some 100 million sharks a year are killed by humans.

The protected status for the great white, *Carcharodon carcharias*, will extend 1,160 miles along the coast and three nautical miles offshore. Anyone found killing or possessing a shark can be fined \$10,000 and/or jailed for six months. The great white is also protected in the waters off South Africa, California and the Maldives.

Son of mercy-killing man switches camps

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN CANBERRA

A SON of the first man to commit legally sanctioned euthanasia is now fighting the law that allowed his father to end his life.

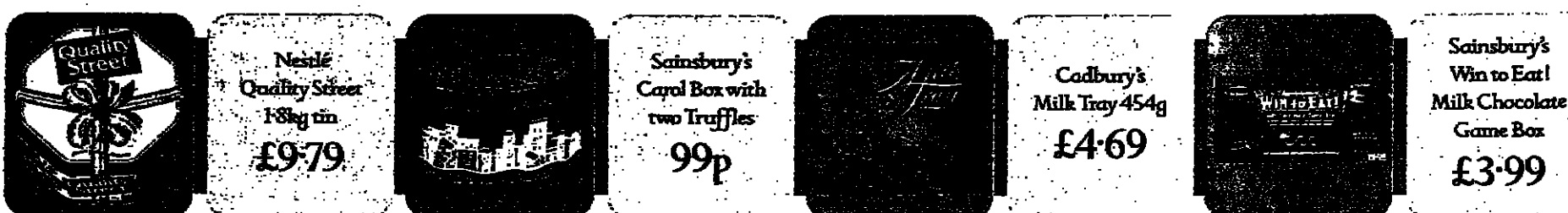
Rod Dent, 40, enthusiastically supported legalised mercy killing immediately after his father, Bob, 66, became the first terminally ill patient to commit suicide on September 22 under a law in Australia's Northern Territory that permits doctor-assisted mercy killing. Yesterday, however, he told a news conference that he had changed his mind.

Mr Dent said he believed his father, who suffered from advanced prostate cancer, would not have committed suicide if he had had access to proper palliative care. "That is a man who wanted to live," Mr Dent said of his father who killed himself with the help of a physician and a

computerised device that administered a lethal drug dose. The Northern Territory's legislature was the first in the world to pass a law sanctioning euthanasia for terminally ill patients. The Australian parliament is considering a bill which, if passed, would override the legislation.

Supporters of the proposed federal law include John Howard, the Prime Minister, and several senior Cabinet ministers. They argue that euthanasia is morally wrong and that more should be done to provide pain relief for terminally ill patients.

Mr Dent, an active member of the governing Liberal Party, said he had changed his mind on moral grounds. He denied accusations by pro-euthanasia groups that his altered stand had been influenced by political ambitions.



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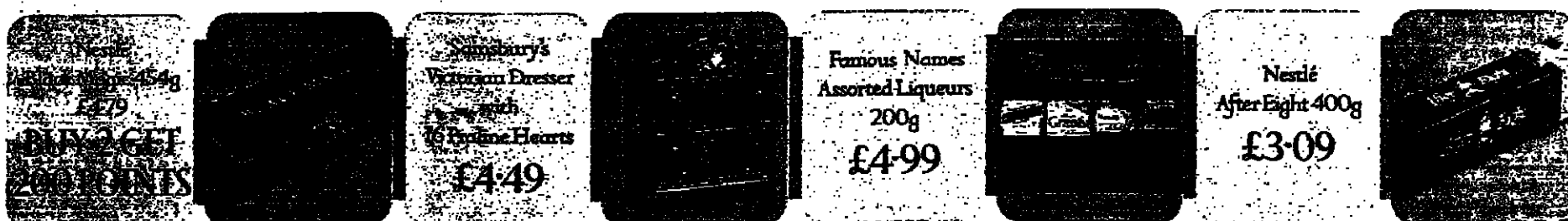
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Gibraltar job goes to minister who quit over Falklands

Fear on Rock as civilian is chosen to be Governor

By DOMINIQUE SEARLE IN GIBRALTAR
AND MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SIR RICHARD LUCE, the former Foreign Office minister who resigned after the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982, is to break a 300-year-old tradition by becoming the first civilian Governor of Gibraltar.

The present Governor, Admiral Sir Hugo White, who took up the post only a year ago, has stepped down because of his wife's ill health. Sir Hugo, who was regarded as a potential future First Sea Lord, is also retiring from the Royal Navy.

The appointment of Sir Richard, also a former Arts Minister, added to fears in Gibraltar that the British Government is changing its policy towards the Rock. The biggest concern has been over the planned reorganisation of Nato commands. Gibraltar, a British dependent territory, is afraid that it will be absorbed into a new command under Spanish control.

Peter Caruana, Gibraltar's Chief Minister, said yesterday that he had been told about the decision to appoint a civilian Governor last week without consultation. He said that the Rock preferred a military Governor, especially with the imminent Nato changes and the reduction in British forces in Gibraltar.

However, Foreign Office sources said that the appointment of Sir Richard, with his Whitehall and political background, should be welcomed by Gibraltarians as "the best man for the job".

There was no significance, they said, in the decision to appoint the first civilian Governor. It merely showed that times had changed and it was felt that a man of Sir Richard's experience would be ideal for the Crown appointment.

Sir Hugo made his decision to step down after his wife

suffered a serious illness requiring treatment in Britain. The change in Governor will coincide with a downgrading of the post of Commander British Forces Gibraltar. Major-General Simon Pack, of the Royal Marines, is being replaced in April next year by Commodore Sym Taylor.

The residence of the commander, a high-prestige property called The Mount worth £4 million, is also being sold. The new commander will be found a suitable married quarters home.

Like his predecessors, Sir Richard will be Commander-in-Chief of Gibraltar and will live at the Governor's residence, a former Franciscan house built in 1503 and known as The Convent.

Sir Richard joined Lord Carrington, then Foreign Secretary, in resigning as a Minister of State at the Foreign Office in April 1982 four days after the invasion of the Falklands. They resigned after taking personal responsibility for the failure to warn the Government of an imminent Argentine attack on the Falklands, despite ominous signs of troops on the mainland.

However, Sir Richard was brought back into the Government in 1983, again as Minister of State at the Foreign Office, although his portfolio did not include Argentina or the Falkland Islands.

He moved from the Foreign Office in 1985 and was appointed Minister of State in the Privy Council Office and Minister for the Arts. He was regarded as a successful Arts Minister who won crucial additional resources for the arts. At present, he is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Buckingham.

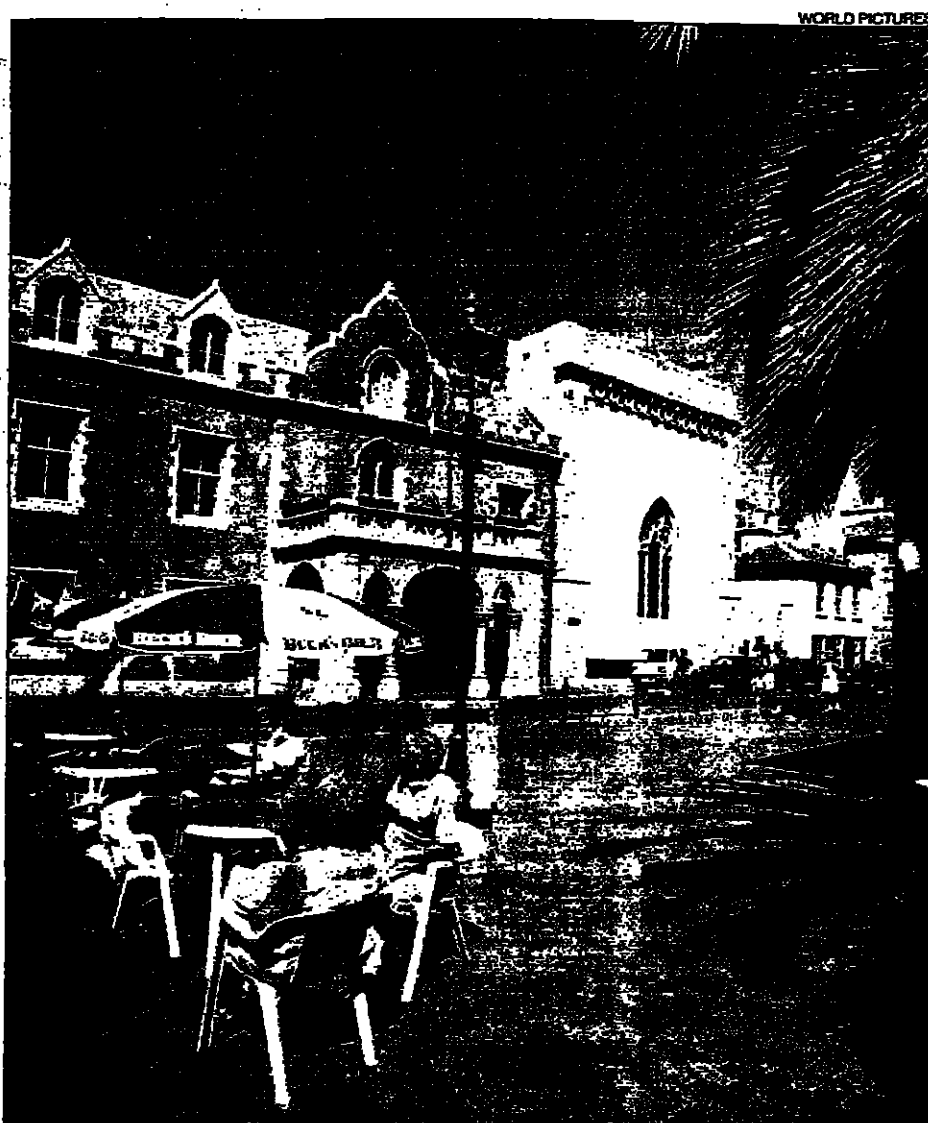
The Spanish Government professed "absolute indifference" yesterday when approached for a reaction to Sir Richard's appointment (Tunku Varadarajan writes from Madrid), adding that Spain's policy on the Rock remained "totally unchanged by any change of Governor".

Inocencio Arias, Director-General of the Diplomatic Information Office and the Spanish Government's senior spokesman on external affairs, said that he had "no reaction to offer on a matter that is purely internal to Great Britain".



Sir Richard, resigned after Falklands attack

Leading article, page 17



Sir Richard Luce's future residence as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Gibraltar is a former Franciscan house built in 1503 and known as The Convent

Wealth of history awaits colony's new knight errant

By JAMES LANDALE AND DOMINIQUE SEARLE

SIR RICHARD LUCE would seem a natural for the governorship of Gibraltar.

His father, Lord William Luce, was a Deputy Governor-General of Sudan and the last British Resident in the Gulf.

Born in 1936, Sir Richard was educated at and ran away from — Wellington College and later read history at Christ's College, Cambridge. In 1960 he went to Kenya as a district officer for two years. But he always had a hanker for politics.

He almost beat Shirley (now Baroness) Williams for Hinchin in 1970 but entered the Commons a year later for the safe seat of Arundel and Shoreham, with a 30,000 majority. An old-style patrician Tory, he was respected for his kindness and decency. He maintained a low profile and eschewed the press. Favouring Margaret Thatcher, then Prime Minister, he was soon made a junior minister at the Foreign Office.

Sir Richard, who was knighted in 1991 and retired at the last general election in 1992, is now Vice-Chancellor of the University of Buckingham. In April 1961, he married a Tory MP's secretary,

Rose Nicholson — whose sister, Emma, defected to the Liberal Democrats earlier this year — and has two sons, Alexander and Edward.

Official sources yesterday confirmed that Sir Richard will take up office and residence at the former Franciscan house known as The Convent, built in 1503 but commandeered when the British took the Rock in 1704.

Sir Richard's appointment comes shortly before the downgrading of the post of Commander British Forces, which will release Gibraltar's second grand residence. The Mount is eventually expected to become the Governor of Gibraltar's residence.

Sir Richard will continue to hold the post of Commander-in-Chief. As Governor, he can expect to lead a gracious life. The Convent is by far the most elegant address on the Rock.

Damaged in the Great Siege of 1799-83, it was extensively renovated in 1863 by Lieutenant-General Sir William Codrington, then Governor. It boasts a ballroom, banqueting hall, an exquisite drawing room, cloisters and a chapel.

The garden, extensive by Gibraltar's standards, has a

wizened old Dragon tree, thought to have been planted in 1470.

At formal dinners the Governor lays the keys of the city on a cedarwood table made from the remains of Spanish vessels that failed to reconquer the Rock in 1782.

In spring a champagne garden party is held in the Convent's private botanic gardens, which also have a swimming pool and tennis courts. Concerts are held in the ballroom.

The Convent houses the offices for the Foreign Office representatives who must cross the Andalusian-style patio and brush past the giant figure of General Eliott, carved from the bowsprit of a Spanish war vessel.

Sir Richard is to maintain the colourful ceremonial tradition and will wear a head-dress and uniform for parades. With his wife he will be required to take on the patronage of the many charities and institutions, which include the magnificent garrison library building still owned by the serving officers of the Rock.

The library was built in 1804 and remains almost unchanged.

Holy cities battle for riches of millennial mammon

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN NAZARETH

TWO of the hottest places on Earth, Israeli-controlled Nazareth and Bethlehem, run by the Palestinian Authority, are vying to secure the lion's share of the multimillion-dollar tourist bonanza from millennium celebrations.

Yesterday Israel unveiled Nazareth 2000, a \$100 million (£62.5 million) scheme to transform the rundown Galilee city, home to 60,000 Israeli Arabs, into a thriving pilgrimage centre complete with religious theme park and eight new hotels.

The drive to lure visitors to the city coincided with predictions of an influx to Israel of ten million to 15 million tourists between 1997 and 2000.

Already teams of workmen are busy repairing and widening streets, blighted by endless traffic jams and open drains. "Nazareth does not deliver what the modern pilgrim expects to see," said Michael Marmar, of the Tourism Ministry. "The city suffers from an incomplete, rundown and neglected municipal and tourism infrastructure."

Bell-towers representing cities worldwide, a museum, restaurant and spice garden are included in the project, according to a 32-page glossy brochure. Ian Oren, project manager, dismissed the claim that Nazareth 2000 was aimed at luring pilgrims away from Bethlehem. But an Israeli official said that no similar funds would be given to Bethlehem.

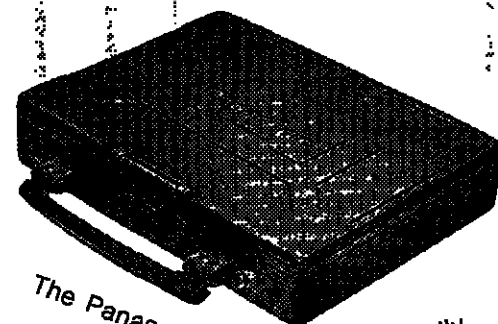
Israel is also planning to transform the nearby site of Armageddon, now known as Megiddo. With sound and light shows, holograms and actors in period dress, sceptics have dubbed the enterprise "Apocalypse".

Palestinians are fearful that events in Bethlehem will be overshadowed. "It is unfair," said one Christian gift-shop owner. "As the birthplace of Jesus, this should be the obvious focal point to mark 2,000 years since the Nativity."

Bethlehem's attempt to raise \$300 million from international sources has been hit by the serious illness of Elias Freij, the veteran Mayor who doubles as Minister of Tourism. Months of closure of the West Bank by the Israelis have added to the problems.

Yassir Arafat, President of the authority, has appointed a committee of 17 academics, led by Mr Freij, to spearhead the drive for new hotels and improved infrastructure in the ramshackle West Bank city of 20,000. Forecasts were for five million people to visit during 1999 alone, but with intifada slogans still daubed on shop fronts locals say the prediction is over-optimistic.

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Pope pleads for Church in China

Rome: The Pope made a public appeal to China yesterday to legalise the Roman Catholic Church and allow members to worship openly (Our Foreign Staff write). An American-based Catholic group said, meanwhile, that about 80 members of the underground Catholic Church have been arrested, beaten and jailed in a district of Jiangsu province. Catholics in China are allowed to worship openly only if they belong to the state-sponsored Catholic Patriotic Association.

Trial for envoy

Paris: President Mubutu of Zaire will allow Ramazani Baya, his Ambassador to Paris, to stand trial for a road accident in which two boys were killed in the South of France, an aide said. (Reuters)

Dawn Fraser ill

Sydney: Dawn Fraser, 59, the Australian former swimming star, is stable in hospital after a suspected heart attack. She was taken ill while on holiday in the New South Wales town of Griffith. (AFP)

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Legal scourge of Israel's political elite stands down

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

MICHAEL BEN-YAIR, Israel's Attorney-General, resigned suddenly yesterday after a turbulent period in office under the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister.

Mr Ben-Yair marked himself as a man who was prepared to investigate Cabinet ministers and to criticise the Israeli security forces and the secret police. He said recently that violence by border police against Palestinians was widespread.

Last year, he gave a warning that the secret police needed to rely more on intelligence gathering than physical force during interrogations to trace suspected terrorists. The



Eitan: investigation

Attorney-General's troubles with the Netanyahu Government began after he initiated a criminal investigation against Rafael Eitan, the Agriculture Minister. The inquiry effectively prevented Mr Eitan from

becoming Public Security Minister, in charge of the police.

Mr Ben-Yair's office also insisted on an inquiry which led to the indictment of Yaacov Neeman, a former Justice Minister, on charges of perjury and obstructing justice.

Ehud Olmert, the Mayor of Jerusalem who is another prominent member of Mr Netanyahu's Likud Party, is also due to stand trial. He has been indicted on charges of fraud, forgery and breach of trust arising from the 1988 elections.

It was speculation that Mr Ben-Yair had been forced to resign by political pressure, but he cited the huge workload imposed on his office. His resignation becomes effective on January 1.

Mother Teresa kept at clinic

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN CALCUTTA

MOTHER TERESA woke after a restless night yesterday, told her doctor she felt better and demanded to go home to be with her fellow nuns at her Missionaries of Charity headquarters in Calcutta. She was told firmly that she remained in a critical condition and could not leave.

Her determination to return to work and her constant arguing with doctors have impressed the medical team looking after her. "You have to admire her will power — she refuses to give up," one of them said.

Mother Teresa, 86, has lung and kidney disease and has developed bronchitis. Her heartbeat remains irregular.

Her pacemaker, fitted in 1989, has been reprogrammed at a higher rate to ensure that her vital organs receive more blood, which has stopped the deterioration of her kidneys. However, although she sat in a chair yesterday to say her prayers, a medical bulletin said there had been no improvement in her pulmonary and renal conditions.

Dr Patricia Aubanel, of Scripps Clinic, California, a member of the medical team looking after her at the BM Birla Heart Research Centre in Calcutta, said Mother Teresa had told her to "work hard" to get her better. Dr Aubanel responded: "You also have to work hard to get well," to

which Mother Teresa replied: "It is my duty, so I will do so."

Almost nothing can make the chaos of Calcutta worse, but Mother Teresa has managed it. Every time rumours spread of her death — at least once a day — traffic in the area of the hospital comes to a halt as people seek news. Newspapers complain that their switchboards are jammed. The police also seal off the roads round the hospital to allow senior politicians to visit her.

Her religious sisters, who are praying constantly for Mother Teresa, are joined each day in their prayers by Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims.

Making sense of abortion fanatics

So why shouldn't abortion enter politics? So far, only those who would like to see it made illegal have argued for its right to become the central political question. It makes as much sense to me that those who believe passionately in the legal right to abortion should also view it as a crucial issue, even to the extent of isolating and then voting on it.

Of course, what is meant by keeping abortion out of politics is not that we shouldn't argue about it, not that politicians shouldn't argue about it, but that we shouldn't seek to see a division of views along party lines. Well, we are not likely to. I concede that abortion is a moral issue, a matter of conscience, but the idea that it should therefore be "above politics" is a difficult one to grasp, insofar as granting access to it, or not, follows from a political act: the act of legislating.

We vote people in to pass laws; surely it makes sense to scrutinise these people's opinions in advance to see whether they accord with our own. And abortion, of all things, is not something one can leave up to someone else to decide upon.

Perhaps, though, we are right to be horrified at what we feel to be the very American encroachment of single-issue politics. But abortion is just one of these single issues which make such a mess in our nice, traditional, binary way of looking at things (sorry, Lib Dems). In a sense, single-issue politics has already left the lobbying system and entered full-time, paid-up, institutionalised politics over here. Europe is the biggest single issue in British politics and we can't blame America for that.

Abortion is different from Europe. While we are bored by Europe, we are used to being bored by politics. But we are impatient with the abortion debate, because we do not like the assumption of moral superiority that the rival camps so pointedly eschew. And both sides are keen to show their first-class ethical credentials. The anti-abortionists are at least a little more honest about this in that they behave as if it is a black-and-white issue because they passionately believe it to be so.

If you believe in the sanctity of life (as I don't), if you are convinced that life is always preferable to death whatever the circumstances, then how can you take anything other than a fanatical stand? It

Single-issue politics has a dangerous attraction for us all

wouldn't make sense otherwise.

Unfortunately, certain pro-abortionists have wished to push their cause by claiming theirs is no less a moral crusade. Up to a point, one could say, they're right. But as Camille Paglia has pointed out, there is honesty at the heart of all this if what abortion involves, the killing of a foetus, is ignored.



Nigella Lawson

She is right to condemn pro-abortionists as pusillanimous for hiding behind the tag of "pro-choice". I confess I have some sympathy for the impulse behind the coinage: to believe in our right to abortion does not necessarily coincide with a belief that it is therefore a good thing. But Paglia is persuasive in her argument that the euphemistic term pro-choice has led to an insistence that a termination is not the violent act it is. She herself, she claims, is "fervently pro-abortion" only "... I recognise that abortion is killing. But slaughter and harvest... are the record of human sustenance and survival for ten thousand years... Modern woman has become an agent of Darwinian triage. It is or should be ethically troubling: abortion pits the stronger against the weaker, and only one survives."

For us this might come

across as madly grandiose rhetoric, but she surely has a point. And she's being honest.

But single-issue politics is bound to involve dishonesty somewhere along the line. You could say all politics is: motives are complex, issues are not so readily packaged, for most of us at any rate. In order to present a single, clearly evolved view, we often have to lie to others, but more often just to ourselves.

In many ways, it is easier to be a fanatic. There is a form of integrity in obsessiveness. It's true, of course, that depth of feeling is no great key to depth of thought. And it's no less the case, that the sincerity with which a view is held is no measure of its value. But now that politics is dead — or said to be — the attraction of a few live issues cannot be denied. It has a dangerous appeal: fundamentalism in all its guises (and maybe especially those that start off as liberal causes) is always to be avoided, if not fought.

If reductionism and fundamentalism are some of the potential dangers of single-issue politics, the real, more immediate flaw is that it is politically unproductive. Everyone has a soapbox to stand on. Modern single-issue politics started with nuclear disarmament — although you can go back to the Corn Laws, and further, to find historical precedents — and the energy that once fuelled that movement now generates any number of players, all banging at their different drums: gay rights, women's rights, the environment, abortion, quarantine. I put that last one in almost as a joke, to show the nature of the exercise, though for a great many people it is probably the most important one of all: what a country.

But however vital the particular single issue is deemed to be, it is never the only issue: to serve the former leads to a terrible diminishment. When I campaigned at the last election, I was appalled that all 19-year-olds cared about was aerosols and animals.

In our hearts, we are all totalitarian dictators, all single-issue politicians. One can tell that the way people start campaigning on matters of which they have personal experience: even Norman Tebbit, he of the get-on-your-bike school of politics, got exercised about wheelchair access. But the real thing about single-issue politics is that we mind only when it isn't our single issue.

Today *The Times* launches its two 1996 Christmas charity appeals



Life assurance: young patient in Guy's Hospital, London, where an operation to help to repair newborn babies' heart defects is being pioneered

A small hope of life

Charlie Sims was born just over a week ago on November 25. Within 48 hours he underwent complex surgery to rearrange the arteries around his heart. Until a few months ago such an operation would not have been attempted and he would have died a few hours after birth. He is in a sunny ward in Guy's Hospital, London, and his parents, Dean and Rachel, are daring to hope their first baby will survive.

Charlie suffers from hypoplastic left ventricle: in a healthy heart the left ventricle is the main pumping chamber supplying blood to the arteries, but in this case it is too small. The arteries have to be reconnected to the right ventricle which would otherwise play a subsidiary role in supplying the lungs.

The operation, first developed in the United States, has

been pioneered in this country by the Evelina Children's Hospital, under the aegis of the Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Trust. Doubters say that doctors can offer parents no promises that the operation will extend their child's life beyond a few years or even months. Supporters say anything is better than leaving a child to die.

The heart defect is diagnosed during routine scanning, usually between 18 and 24 weeks. Parents have the choice of an abortion, or allowing the child to be born but declining the operation, or consenting to surgery. In the past 18 months David Anderson, a heart surgeon, has performed 20 of the operations and so far there are 11 survivors. Of the others, two died before the operation and the rest either during the operation or afterwards.

"It's a highly complex busi-

ness," Dr Ted Baker, a paediatric cardiologist, points out. "These tiny bodies have to be put on a heart/lung machine, which is a big ordeal at that time of life. But we're getting better. The last six patients have survived, and we believe that survival is becoming consistent enough to justify what we are doing."

Dr Baker says that at this early stage doctors have to be highly cautious in advising parents. "We have to warn them that their children's lives may be short and their quality poor. But two years ago none of these children would have survived; it's marvellous that we have progressed so far."

The Evelina Children's Hospital Appeal has raised more than £5 million for a children's ward and four intensive care cots, as well as financing research.

JOHN YOUNG

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Save our species

THE profits made from the unscrupulous trade in wildlife is worth more than \$4 billion a year. The poachers do not care that they have hunted the tiger and the black rhino to near-extinction, only that their own trade — according to Interpol — is worth more than international diamond smuggling and illicit weapons dealing.

Every year the poachers slaughter more so that rhino horns can be ground into aphrodisiacs, elephant tusks fashioned into trinkets, or bears' paws served up in restaurants. Governments may sign international conventions but they do little to stop those with the machine-gun and the machete.

The charity Tusk Force is dedicated to saving these animals but it is equally passionate about safeguarding endangered species in Britain, such as the dormouse and the water vole, which were once a common part of our habitat and are now a rarity.

Tusk Force also has a successful conservation project in the Angus glens in the Highlands to protect threatened species such as the red squirrel, the wild cat and the otter. Neela Bettridge, director of Tusk Force, said: "It seems so ridiculous to tell others what to do with their wildlife when there are so many of our own species at serious risk."

Credit card donations to Tusk Force can be made on 0345 414616. Cheques, membership and other enquiries should be sent to: Tusk Force, Ravenscourt House, 123 Askew Road, W12 9AU.

DAN MCGRORY
TOMORROW: The destruction of the African elephant



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Nothing to be done with the playboy Duke

The former King was a fool, but no traitor, says Philip Ziegler

Princes of Wales have had a thin time of it over the past few years. Of late it has been the present holder of the title who has been in the worst trouble. He has made a mess of his marriage, is dangerously honest, and has a propensity for saying what he thinks. As a result, he has time and again left himself open to attack from those who dislike the institution of monarchy or who would prefer their future King to be an animated waxwork, mouthing platitudes and waving politely to the crowd. The fact that he is by far the best-equipped future monarch of this or possibly any other century seems to have had little effect on his public standing.

But compared with his great-uncle, briefly King Edward VIII and later Duke of Windsor, he has come off lightly. Among other onslaughts, the luckless Duke has been the subject of a television documentary called *Edward: The Traitor King* without even the courtesy of a question mark. Prince Edward, with his counterblast, did his best to redress the balance, but as is usually the case, the muck proved more effective than the subsequent sponging operation.

Today Edward VIII is widely believed to have been a Nazi-sympathiser who did his best to sell out his country to his enemies in the hope of recapturing the throne and ruling with German support. There has recently been a lull in the process of vilification, but the sixtieth anniversary of the Abdication and yesterday's release of certain hitherto embargoed Foreign Office documents will no doubt set the mills grinding merrily again.

In fact there is precious little in these papers which was not made available to me when I was writing the official biography, and nothing which can support the wilder theories about their subject's villainy. The Duke of Windsor was not a traitor. He would never have contemplated returning as King to a Britain under German occupation. He did not wittingly pass information of any value to the enemy. He was overimpressed by the domestic successes of National Socialism, but never condoned the anti-Semitism of the Nazi regime, still less the horrors of the Holocaust.

But it must be admitted that the papers present a most unflattering picture of the Duke's activities. They deal mainly with the period when he was in France in 1939 and 1940 with a military mission charged vaguely with liaison with the French; his escapades in Spain and Portugal after the fall of France; his time as Governor of the Bahamas; and his financial problems during that period and when the war was over. In all these fields he showed himself silly, indiscreet and egotistical; the new material reinforces the accepted view that by 1936 he was unfit to occupy the throne. In France in 1940 he went his own way with cavalier indifference to his superior officers, and though he did not directly disobey orders, as has been alleged, he allowed his private affairs to intrude improperly in his public life. In Spain and Portugal he showed

himself defeatist and preached the merits of a negotiated peace at a time when and in places where it was unforgivable to air such views. In the Bahamas he consorted with and probably accepted financial favours from people to whom he should have given a wide berth for reasons both personal and political. After the war he flouted currency regulations and disconcerted the tax authorities in at least three countries. This was not the whole story: in the Bahamas, for instance, he mostly worked hard and sensibly in the interests of the islanders. But the overall picture reflects little credit on him.

His life fills one with despair at the pointless waste. When young he had shown such promise. Though privately racked by self-doubt, he presented himself to the world as vigorous, enthusiastic, interested in all he heard or saw, deeply concerned about the wellbeing of his future subjects. His charm was as effective on the crustiest and most Anglophobic of French generals as on surly crowds in Glasgow or awed republicans in the Australian Outback. His simplicity, humility and dislike of pomp seemed to offer a new and hopeful way forward for the monarchy.

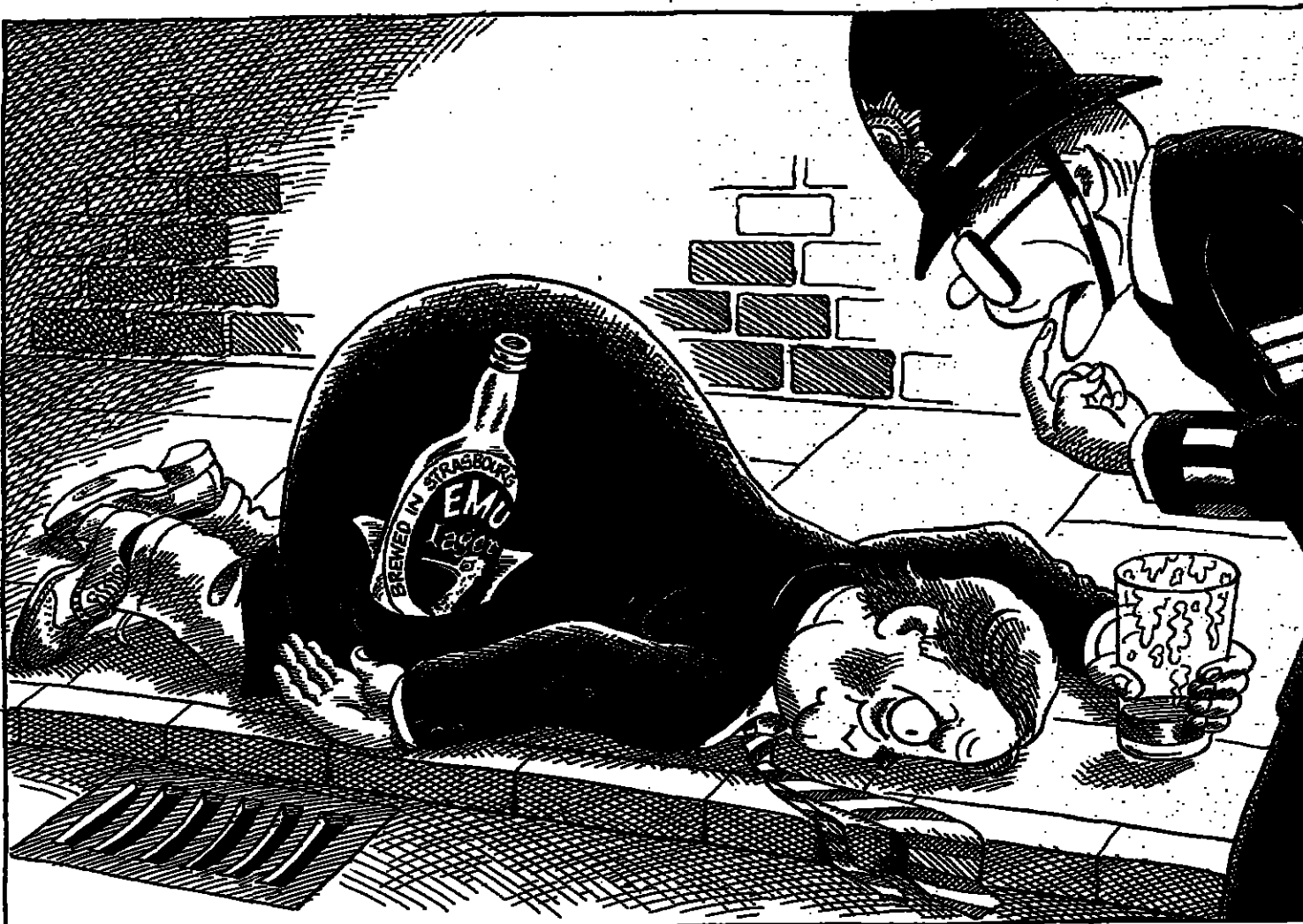
And then the bright vision faded. Bagehot some 70 years before had written perceptively about the problem: "Whatever is most attractive, whatever is most seductive, has always been offered to the Prince of Wales of the day, and always will be. It is not rational to expect the best virtue where temptation is applied in the most trying form at the frailest time of human life."

Faced with such temptations, the Prince of Wales succumbed. The adulation of the masses fostered a foolish self-importance, a belief that he could play a role as leader for which he was ill-equipped and from which he was constitutionally self-indulgent. Idleness, self-indulgence, frivolity eroded his powers of concentration and his determination.

The goodwill remained. When he contemplated the dereliction of the recently closed Dowling steelworks and exclaimed indignantly "Something must be done to find them work", he meant it for the moment and held forth on the subject at a London dinner party the same night. But within 24 hours his own, more urgent preoccupations had driven the unemployed from his mind. He picked up and dropped ideas with giddy rapidity, frittered away his time in trivial pursuits. The dogged seriousness of purpose of his brother, George VI, seemed to him absurd, even pitiful.

People who condemn the present Prince of Wales should consider how remarkable it is that he has maintained his grandeur and his mother's seriousness of purpose, though exposed to temptations every bit as seductive as those which Bagehot described. The Abdication is a grisly reminder of how badly things can go wrong; it is not a blueprint for what lies ahead.

Philip Ziegler's King Edward VIII appeared in 1990.



ANOTHER CASE OF INTOXICATION.

Whipped and scorned

Never mind if politics is a dog's life: what about the career of government?

There must be plenty worse clubs than the House of Commons. The fellowship is cosy. The dignity is massive, the perks legion and the snuff free. As I toss my pebbles into the street from the scribbler's garret, I sometimes wonder if the parliamentary life might not have been for me. Sometimes, but not often. When I witness scenes such as Sir Nicholas Scott's ejection from his constituency on Monday night, I am left with a different question. Who on earth could want to be an MP? What benefit could possibly compensate for such ritual humiliation?

At the weekend another MP, David Willetts, felt obliged to put about that he would resign as a junior minister if criticised by the Commons Standards and Privileges Committee. This body was trying him for having supposedly sought to influence its hypersensitive (and ineffective) predecessor. Politics is a rough game. It is not for soft hearts or thin skins. As Enoch Powell bitterly attested, all political lives end in failure. But for any employed person to be at the mercy of such procedures is absurd. It is politics as professional terror.

Sir Nicholas's fate as an elected representative was sealed not by any democratic process. Like Margaret Thatcher in 1990, he went down to that favourite institution of the Militant Tendency, a majority of a minority, for the first time. The first minority was the one third of the 3,000 Conservative Party members in Kensington and Chelsea who attended the meeting that voted him out. The second was the much smaller proportion of Tory voters in the constituency who are party members. There was no postal ballot. Enthusiasts for "rule by mass meeting" must have cheered. Sir Nicholas is politically dead. These are the sort of shenanigans from which Tony Blair is trying to rescue the Labour Party.

Mr Willetts is not dead, but he stands accused of something considered more serious by his fellow MPs. As a junior whip last year he misruled a discussion about a Commons select committee with its chairman, the amiable Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith. Such meetings take place all the time, but MPs are privately ashamed of them. They imply that the Commons is less than wholly independent of the executive. Acknowledging them, let alone in writing, is anathema. Mr Willetts had committed the ultimate political crime of being caught in

flagrant possession of the truth. Once again, a possibly distinguished career is at risk on the most trivial of pretexts.

Neither Sir Nicholas nor Mr Willetts is at present at the top of his calling. Sir Nicholas enjoyed a ministerial career of mild distinction, in Northern Ireland and at Social Security. At 63 he was on the way down. Mr Willetts is 40 and on the way up. Both are cases of the new professional politician. Sir Nicholas first won election to his local council at 23. Mr Willetts became Nigel Lawson's research assistant at 22. Even

Scratch a politician's ego and underneath you will find paranoia about the whips. Almost all the present Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet "came up through the Whips' Office". It is the prefects room not just of Parliament but of a profession. Both party leaders have used the Whips' Office not just to discipline Parliament but as the arbiter of the career of politics. It is as if a doctor could advance by appointment from the General Medical Council. The concept of a British politician having a following in the country that qualifies them for office is meaningless. The only following that is needed is among the whips.

Simon Jenkins

Thatcher admitted that her survival in Edward Heath's Cabinet, and thus as a plausible candidate for the succession, was due to her being the only available woman. Otherwise the whips would have had her for breakfast in the reshuffle of 1972.

I find it inconceivable that any successful and prosperous outsider over the age of 40 should want to subject him or herself to the infantile disciplines of Parliament, or pass through such a tedious initiation rite to high office. Last September Archie Norman, head of the Asda group, won the candidature for Tunbridge Wells and the world gasped. *The Sunday Telegraph* asked what a respectable 42-year-old businessman was doing "dirtying his hands in politics".

In the last century, even in the first half of this, nobody would have thought this unusual. Nor would they in America, or France, or Germany. In Britain today it is considered extraordinary. Yet to proceed, Mr Norman will doubtless have to work his way up the whips ladder, to be tested for loyalty and soundness. Only after years in the good books of the Whips' Office would he be considered qualified to

head a Ministry of Defence or a Department of Transport.

Britons do not apply for high office. They may not run for it or stand for election to it. Though in the public sector and paid from the public purse, ministerial office is not advertised. It is awarded in secret, and removed in the same fashion. Even at the level of the constituency, Sir Nicholas was lucky that, having failed to secure endorsement by his executive committee, he was allowed to take his case to a closed party meeting. Mr Willetts is less lucky. He broke a club rule, a rule formulated to conceal a shameful process and therefore apparently concealed from him. At least his was a crime committed in the cause of whipping. He should survive.

A profession that has spent the past two decades lecturing itself seems unable to countenance self-improvement of any sort. When one departing MP, Dudley Fishburn, suggested that there were too many MPs and they were grossly underworked, there was uproar. How dare he blow the whistle? Parliament may demand the ending of other people's closed shops, may plead open trade and unrestricted practices. Yet it is blind to the beam in its own eye. It cannot even reform Prime Minister's Questions, which all sides profess to find an embarrassing shambles.

Parliament does not, I believe, see itself as a professional career. It is rather a fraternity of "Honourable Members", self-selected in early life, whose ethical code is now notoriously threadbare. MPs take less delight in each other's ability than they do in each other's misfortune. Nothing so boosts party morale, wrote Alan Clark, "as the imminent execution of a senior colleague". MPs are like sharks "circling and waiting for traces of blood in the water". Yet within that fraternity a most important career must germinate and flower, that of government.

The test of the vigour of a profession is its ability to regulate and reform itself without statutory constraint. Teachers, academics and lawyers have failed that test and government has eagerly intervened. Journalists and doctors may yet fail. Yet who will reform the reformers? The club of politics is clearly an enjoyable one. It is a pity about the career of government.

Alan Coren

God rest you merry, partygoers: I saw you last year

I read, today, on eggshells. Worse yet, if I slip off the eggshells, I could step on mines, mantraps, gins. I may find myself dangling aloft from one agonised ankle or crouching at the bottom of some unscaleable pit, and if I call out to friends or relatives or colleagues to help me down, or up, they will not come, contending these to be my just deserts.

They have got me wrong. I really do want to go to all the Christmas parties to which they have invited me. I really am touched and grateful to have been asked. Look at these dozen stiffly standing on my lucky mantelpiece, does not each have a big happy tick on it? And am I not hugely looking forward to fronting up at every venue? Are my clothes not pressed, my shoes not buffed, my nails not pared, my noddies and backs and wreathed smiles not straining in the slits?

Why, then, am I protesting so much? Is something bothering me? Only this: I know what lies in store. For me, and from me. Here I am at a packed Broadcasting House party, having animated conversationettes about digital transmission, or producer's choice, or licence fees, here comes my old joke about John Birt, there goes someone else's about Alan Yentob, soon it will be time to flirt with the woman I flirted with last year, shall I do it before or after the row I have with the man I had the row with last year, when would be the best time to tell Melvyn how much I admire him, again? Not to worry, if I miss anything out, I can make amends the day after tomorrow, when there is another packed party at TV Centre, they will all be there.

But first there is tomorrow, and here I am at *The Times* party, having animated conversationettes about circulation, or downsizing, or subbing, here comes my old joke about Bernard Levin, there goes someone else's about Simon Jenkins, soon it will be time to flirt with the woman I flirted with last year, shall I do it before or after you know what, when would be the best time to tell Matthew how much I admire him, again? Not to worry if I miss anything out, they'll all be at next week's *Spectator* party, or at a party for *Another Newspaper*, or two days after at this ambassador's or that, or at the one between, at that politician's or this.

Family parties? Friends' ones? Just the same, I see, just the same as last Yule's, give or take the odd divorce or headstone, what's your son doing, mine's doing this, how was Tuscan, Provence was great, did you change cars, nor did I, is your hernia still playing up, I must sort out this bloody cartilage, what about the Budget, then, what about QPR?

I hear, now, the eggshells crack, as host jaws clench. But I do not say these faster will not be fun, only that that fun will be predictable, and I say it after looking not at my own mantelpiece but at a friend's. He is an auctioneer. At lunch last Sunday, I saw his cards. He is going to parties thrown by antique dealers, philatelists, old banger buffs, art collectors, fifty millionaires, mad peers, and, of course, family and friends, and he is looking forward to these as much as I am to mine.

That is, not quite as much as if each were going to the others. You catch my drift: *mutatis mutandis*. I should not only be captivated by conversationettes about bun feet and Silver Ghosts, I should captivate in my turn with anecdotes of Portland Place and Wapping. I should not only lust a gut at unknown jokes about Stanley Gibbons and Mohamed Ali Fayed, but bust those of others coming fresh to Birt and Levin, the rooms would teem with men and women hitherto unrowed and unfriended with, and as for the less professional intimacies of family and friends, what could more refresh the jaded social palate than to fetch up against another's uncle, whose son's career and Bangkok fortnight, four-wheel drive and hip replacement, fiscal opinions and support for Fulham would be as delightfully novel to me as my equivalents were to him?

I have to tell you that the auctioneer felt just the same. So we mullied awhile, and concluded that this column should put it to the Royal Mail to mangle a service whereby all invitations would be redirected to a Central Party Unit, there to be shuffled and randomly forwarded. Will they act? Who can say, but, next year, you spot an unfamiliar bald bloke at your Auntie Flo's telling a joke about John Birt, do try to laugh.

Bunkered

VIENNA was no place for pulling punches yesterday as Rachel Whiteread, the Turner Prize-winning artist most famous for her concrete house in east London, laid into the Austrian authorities who have been picking apart her planned Holocaust monument in the city.

Whiteread won a competition in January to design a memorial to the 65,000 murdered Austrian Jews to be sited in Judenplatz, site

of a mass Jewish suicide in 1421. Now, in reaction to complaints from residents, the city authorities have been considering moving it to another site. Whiteread is not happy and at a press conference yesterday threatened legal action if her pile, called *The Nameless Library*, is not built as agreed.

Brandishing a letter from the council saying the location of the monument was an "unshakable fact", she said: "I have been kept in the dark over political ramblings. In my contract there is no leeway at all for changing the site and I feel upset about the way I have been treated by the city of Vienna."

Detractors liken the 266 cubic metre hollow stack of books, in concrete and asphalt, to a "concrete bunker" but Whiteread is adamant: "It won't look like a bunker and it will not be moved." Fans include Simon Wiesenthal, the Nazi hunter, though as Roland Augustine, Whiteread's New York agent, said: "This has more to do with politics than art."

Pas de deux

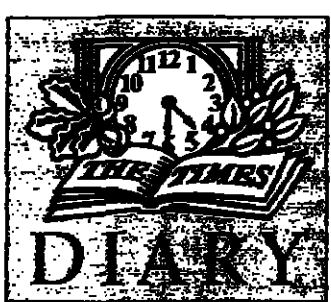
POLITICAL differences were neat-

ly finessed at the English National Ballet on Monday night where Diana, Princess of Wales, was guest of honour at a special performance and dinner.

Seated at her table were two of the most socially thrusting of politicians from left and right: Peter Mandelson, Labour MP for Hartlepool and as omnipresent at London parties these days as Thai-style hors d'oeuvres, and Shaun Woodward, Tory candidate for Douglas Hurd's impregnable safe seat, Witney. Spotting the need to share her favours, midway through the



"This Samson story is a bit worrying, isn't it?"



dinner, the Princess swapped places with Pamela Lady Harlech, chairman of ENB and sexual etiquette-lecturer to the boys of Downside School. Both Tory and Labourite looked happy with the sentiment.

It was not Bruce Babbitt who had to withdraw his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination because he was caught borrowing from the speeches of Neil Kinnock, as I suggested yesterday, but Joseph Biden. Apologies to Mr Babbitt, President Clinton's estimable Secretary for the Interior.

Unholy mess

ALL is not well with the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to Rome. He has needed the Vatican with his decision to speak at the second

Anglican church in Rome, where just a few weeks ago an Eucharist woman, an Anglican convert from Catholicism, was ordained a priest under the sight of St Peter's. "Extremely insensitive" was the verdict of senior Vatican officials, who have never had much time anyway for the Most Rev George Carey, especially his pious habit of referring to himself as a "spiritual leader".

The theme of his talk to the Anglicans was the coincidence of World Aids Day with the beginning of Advent. He used it as an opportunity to wheel out his favourite lines from Tony Hancock's blood donor sketch, the ones about Heaven, Hell and Judgment. Just the Vatican's sort of thing.

Guillotined

NEXT up for the Lady Antonia Fraser treatment is Louis XVI's wife, Marie-Antoinette. Lady Antonia, a fluent French speaker, will soon be off to France to read stacks of original documents.

Which reminds me of one of the first of her literary undertakings: the translation into English of the dreadful biography of the fashion designer Christian Dior for Lord Widespread.

Unsurprisingly, the book fails to make an appearance in Lady

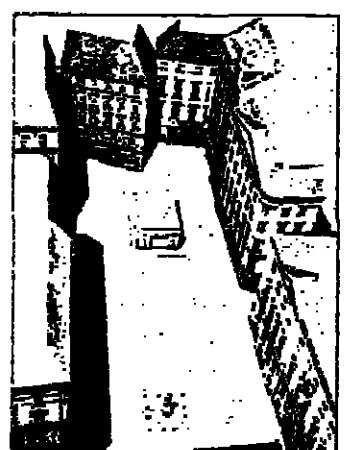


Antonia on Antoinette

Antonia's extensive *Who's Who* entry.

Sir Nicholas Scott, ousted MP for Kensington and Chelsea, wasn't alone in feeling woozy on that fateful evening in Boar's Head when he fell into a gutter. Moments beforehand, he had parted company with an amiable Irish journalist who took himself off for a walk on the beach to freshen up. There, our friend tripped over a groyne to land face down in the sea, fracturing two ribs.

P.H.S



Concrete mix-up



A MAJOR MISTAKE

The Prime Minister has unnecessarily surrendered a weapon

The combination of a determined Chancellor and an opportunist Deputy has almost certainly condemned the Prime Minister to fight the coming election without one of his best potential weapons. The faces on either side of the Commons gangway yesterday showed which party saw most to gain from John Major's decision not to rule out joining a single currency before the election. Conservatives were glum and mute; Labour Members were cheering and jubilant, sensing that another obstacle on their path to power had been removed.

As our political editor reports today, a key cause of the newly hardened position was a report in *The Daily Telegraph* on Monday that the Prime Minister had decided to try to change his Chancellor's mind and to give up the "wait and see" position on EMU at some point nearer the election. Government insiders were happy to dismiss the *Telegraph* claim as "wishful thinking". But Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, the only two ministers determined to keep the currency option open until election day, took advantage of the report to mount an ambush. On Monday, the Chancellor described the *Telegraph* stories as "preposterous", and yesterday at lunchtime the Deputy Prime Minister stated that the position would not change in this Parliament or in the course of an election campaign. In response to Tony Blair, the Prime Minister found himself with no option but to back his two senior ministers, making a pledge from which there are no easy escape routes.

In doing so, Mr Major went against the wishes of three quarters of his Cabinet colleagues, of most of his parliamentary party and of the vast majority of his candidates and campaigners. He has now surrendered one of the last few weapons left in his locker for use against Labour. Such an abdication was wrong and unnecessary. Circumstances can and will change between now and May; the Prime Minister ought to have been able to equivocate now and remain ready for

those changed circumstances later. Until recently, Labour leaders felt most vulnerable to two lines of attack in the run-up to the election. First, they feared having to vote against a sharply tax-cutting Budget. And secondly, they dreaded the Conservatives moving away from them on Europe and portraying them as the party that would surrender Britain's powers to Brussels. Their relief yesterday was palpable. The Budget has presented them with none of the pre-election problems that it had threatened to do. Now the chance of a Conservative electoral advantage on Europe has been severely reduced.

This will dismay parliamentary candidates and their activists. A pledge not to join the single currency during the next Parliament could have helped them on many doorsteps. In one swoop it could have pulled back wavering voters from both Labour and the Referendum Party. And it would have chimed with the views of most prospective Tory MPs. Now the Prime Minister will be in the embarrassing position of being contradicted by many of his own candidates' election addresses.

Mr Major's surrender to the unrepresentative views of the two men closest to him makes him look weak to the outside world while increasing dissent within his party. Worse, the closer the general election looms, the more untenable this supposedly unequivocal position will become.

Away from the world of Westminster lobbyists, wishful thinking journalists and questions of electoral advantage, the British public will still deserve an answer from both party leaders to the question of whether they plan to take Britain into a single currency during the subsequent Parliament. The decision will have to be taken by the new government within just a few months of the poll. By the time of the campaign, almost all of the details will have been agreed. This will be the biggest question facing the country at election time: it is not one that either man should be allowed to duck.

A CIVILIAN IN THE CONVENT

Sir Richard Luce brings an age to a close in Gibraltar

Ever since Sir George Rooke captured Gibraltar for the Crown in the War of the Spanish Succession, tradition has ruled that a man in uniform should occupy the Convent, the Governor's graceful residence on the Rock. The list of military Governors, including Admiral Sir Hugo White, the incumbent, has been a distinguished one and Gibraltarians have taken pride in this link with Britain's Armed Forces.

The link, however, has become increasingly symbolic as Gibraltar's strategic importance to Britain has declined. Yesterday, the Foreign Office announced that a civilian, Sir Richard Luce, will be the colony's next Governor. The break with tradition may be justified in terms of Gibraltar's changed circumstances. The post of Commander, British Forces Gibraltar, is being downgraded and his residence sold; the garrison has been cut to fewer than 600 men. Gibraltar's status within Nato is being changed as part of the extensive reorganisation of the Southern Command. Gibmed is to cease to be a Nato military command and its future is up for review next week. The case for a military Governor is no longer easily made.

Politically, the choice of Sir Richard is more controversial. This is not because he lacks experience, but because of his close association, as the relevant junior Foreign Office minister at the time, with Britain's failure in the early Eighties to read Argentine intentions with respect to the Falklands correctly.

In Gibraltar, this is liable to add to anxiety

that Britain is changing its policy towards the Rock. Spain is as adamant as it has ever been in the assertion of its claim to Gibraltar. The Gibraltarians, similarly, are as unwavering as ever in their desire not to be Spanish. The election last May of the moderate and sophisticated Peter Caruana as Gibraltar's Chief Minister offered a chance for smoother relations with Madrid. But Spain has made all too little of the opportunity. The British Government, as always, has to continue balancing its duty towards Gibraltar's residents with a natural desire for good relations with Spain. The Foreign Office's failure to consult Mr Caruana about the appointment was unwise.

Sir Richard's talents will have limited scope. His position is circumscribed by law, and is largely titular. Yet Gibraltar's status as Europe's last colony gives him considerable informal and extra-constitutional responsibilities. Although Gibraltar's sovereignty is not and must not be negotiable over the heads of the Gibraltarians themselves, there are other areas of this 292-year-old dispute which could profit from greater diplomatic finesse on the spot.

Sir Richard would, however, act unwisely if he were to see his role as anything other than complementary to that of the democratically elected administration of Gibraltar. His first task is to gain the confidence of the Gibraltarians. If he does so and is seen to respect their concerns, the first civilian Governor on the Rock will be able to claim that the break with tradition proved to be justified by results.

PRECISION CHARITIES

Evelina and Tusk Force deserve the generosity of Times readers

This is the season of charity in all the manifold meanings of that word, a time when a vast fund of British goodwill is searching for a target. But dropping notes into a collecting box can sometimes seem as imprecise as administering eye-drops from the fifth storey, the effect down below wholly unquantifiable. In the recent past *The Times* has chosen some great and worthy charities for its Christmas appeal. This year, we have chosen two small charities with a particularly specific reach: the Evelina Children's Hospital and Tusk Force.

Sick children and threatened species are popular targets for charity. Both are helpless victims. Both are the recipients of general goodwill and the support of larger colleagues. But, as we describe on page 15, these charities are targeted to a pinpoint. Their results can be measured, and must be continually monitored if they are to carry on their good work. These are precision charities.

The children who come to the Evelina are suffering from severe neurological and heart disorders that need intensive specialist treatment. This children's hospital for Guy's and St Thomas's has pioneered the concept of parents being closely involved in the care of their children. It will always find room for parents to stay with their child. It prides itself on its school for children of all ages. And although it is a local hospital for London and the South East, its unique services are sought more widely. Last year it treated children from every health district in England and Wales.

Money given to the Evelina not only goes to a good cause that needs donations. Most charities qualify as that, which makes charitable giving a matter of hard choices as well as a warm heart. But in this case the money also goes to a charity which is determined that those who give can follow its activities in detail, and learn much about the wonders of life from them.

Such is also the case with Tusk Force. This charity funds particular missions to save a species at risk of extinction, from the tiger to the sea turtle. Some are being squeezed out by the cruel folly of humans who hunt the Siberian tiger for its magnificent pelt and elephants for their ivory and who grind up rhinoceros horns as symbolic magic for a supposed aphrodisiac. Others, such as the otter, are at risk because of population pressures on their habitats. Tusk Force pays for anti-poaching teams to protect them, taking care to win the support of both the host country and the scientific community. And because this charity begins at home, it also takes the smaller practical steps to save the dormouse and the water vole, which are becoming strangers in their native habitat. Without such protection, future generations will meet the tiger, the elephant and the red squirrel only in a museum or on a screen.

Money given to both the Evelina Children's Hospital and Tusk Force will go to charities that desperately need it. It will be used for simple, direct ends. We ask our readers to show their best generosity of the season.

Medical profession's concern at new advertising rules

From the Chairman of the Patients Association

Sir, The General Medical Council's decision to allow hospital consultants to advertise to the public addresses an important concern. What is wanted by prospective patients, however, is objective information about the individual performance of clinical specialists.

The President of the Royal College of Surgeons, Sir Rodney Sweetnam, says (letter, November 26) that patients are "normally directed wisely by their referring general practitioner". The truth is that we know rather little objectively about the basis of referrals, and of their outcomes.

Patients want a relationship of solidarity with their GP: kindness, time and an adviser who can spot treatable disease promptly and then get them to the best specialist. Patients' minds would be eased if they knew how often the specialist undertakes the proposed treatment and what other patients say about the results. The Government should require publication of the first; interactive databases will rapidly offer the second.

The issue surely is not that some specialists should advertise if they wish. It is that basic facts about all specialists should be required to be published and these facts be considered by the patient with the GP.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN SPIERS, Chairman,
The Patients Association,
8 Gifford Street, WC1.
December 2.

From Dr Stuart Sanders

Sir, As a general practitioner I support wholeheartedly Sir Rodney Sweetnam. The United Kingdom GP is currently the "gate-keeper" to consultant and specialist medical services and I would urge the General Medical Council to reconsider its decision to allow specialists to advertise.

It would be a great shame if our

well established and time-honoured practice were to be jettisoned in favour of the anarchical system in the United States where patients choose their own specialist.

Yours faithfully,
STUART SANDERS,
22 Hartmont House,
20 Harley Street, W1,
November 26.

From Mr N. H. Harris

Sir, I warmly support Sir Rodney Sweetnam's letter.

Commercially minded, unscrupulous doctors providing a poor standard of care would be among those most likely to advertise. The unsuspecting and vulnerable patient would suffer the consequences. All good GPs are aware of the existence of these doctors and are able to protect their patients' interest.

It is very sad that the close confidential doctor-patient relationship, which has already been compromised in the hospitals by the emphasis on market principles, is to be further eroded by the GMC condoning what has hitherto been unacceptable behaviour by doctors. It seems we can no longer call ourselves a profession because we will simply be a collection of businessmen.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL HARRIS
(Consultant orthopaedic surgeon),
72 Harley Street, W1,
November 27.

From Dr Nanu Grewal

Sir, The debate between the holistic and specialist schools of medicine is an ancient one and Sir Rodney Sweetnam's letter raises a new aspect. The current trend is towards greater patient choice and away from paternalism. Patients already choose to see osteopaths and physiotherapists outside the GP referral system.

In the UK, GPs have a dual role as the patient's agent and the gatekeeper

to specialist hospital services which will be lost if advertising by specialists cuts out the middle man. Let us be too wistful about the referral system. I cite a landmark ruling in Australia. A GP referred a patient to a specialist, the patient failed to see the specialist and, her condition having worsened, she successfully sued the GP for not ensuring that she made it to the appointment.

A utilitarian view would recognise that direct self-referrals to specialists would ease the currently excessive work load in general practice.

Yours faithfully,
N. GREWAL,
Oriel College, Oxford,
November 26.

From Mr James Wood

Sir, The points raised by Sir Rodney Sweetnam are very reminiscent of what has happened to the optometric profession.

Some 12 years ago optometrists were accused of not providing patients with enough information, and the General Optical Council was called upon to relax the rules of advertising. This resulted in a complete abandonment of almost every rule and unbridled claims being made by advertisers. It may already be too late for the medical profession to halt this trend, the excuse always being that the public needs to know.

The real arguments should be about how the public will actually benefit from this change, and how to achieve a balance between information and downright commercialism.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES WOOD
(National Chairman,
Association of Optometrists, 1982-83;
Member, General Optical Council),
King & Wood (Optometrists),
137 High Street,
Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne,
November 26.

Overbooking in the air

From Mr A. J. Lucking

Sir, Harvey Elliott (Travel News, November 28) is right to focus attention on the airlines' habit of ejecting ("bumping") passengers off flights that prove to have been overbooked.

However, I do not believe that the major cause is "selfish businessmen" making multiple bookings. A 1993 report by the Association of European Airlines, found that the biggest cause of "bumps" was travel agents who promise airlines bookings for passengers whom they have not yet identified. No-shows by passengers accounted for only about 30 per cent of "bumps", and most of these were not malicious but due to traffic jams, going to the wrong airport, etc.

Furthermore, some airlines do not exploit the ability of their computers to identify possible multiple bookings, perhaps because they perceive an accommodating attitude as good for customer relations.

The special difficulties on Australian routes could be a symptom of the BA-Quantas policy of reducing the number of seats and raising fares in order to increase profit, though it is reassuring to read that BA has reduced its "involuntary offloads" from seven to five per 10,000 passengers. This brings them a little nearer to the US airlines' average of about one per 10,000.

Yours faithfully,
A. J. LUCKING,
20/17 Broad Court, WC2.
November 28.

From Miss Jennifer Wood

Sir, Airlines could probably reduce the numbers of "no-show" incidents, at least in the economy class, by sorting out their pricing policy.

The price of a one-way ticket is so much higher than that of a cheap-rate economy return that nobody with any sense would ever buy the former. After an economy ticket has been used for the outward leg the return flight may then not be taken up.

Even if they feel they ought to notify the airline of their intention not to show up for the return flight, many people probably fail to do so because they feel guilty about using the system in this way or because they are afraid of the sort of penalties suggested by Mr Elliott. Or it may be simply that, having already travelled on from the airport, they have no idea how to reach the airline in question.

Perhaps one of the airlines could conduct a poll of their passengers to find out how many of them would have bought a one-way ticket if it had been available at half the price of a cheap return.

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER WOOD,
1 Okeford House, Canford Lane,
Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol,
November 28.

Jam today

From Mr A. G. Alexander

Sir, Mr J. Sharp (letter, November 27; see also letter, November 20) commenting on the number of vehicles expected by the year 2025, states: "Of course, all these vehicles would not be moving at the same time."

Rather like the M25 today.

Yours faithfully,
A. G. ALEXANDER,
245 Rushdown Road, Rochester, Kent,
November 27.

Politics and homosexuality in Exeter

From Dr Adrian Rogers

Sir, Matthew Parris (article, December 2) calls me a hater of homosexuals, dishonestly and distastefully links this with Nazi anti-Semitism and generally invites the homosexual lobby to target me in Exeter in the forthcoming general election. Who is the bigot and what is true?

I do not hate homosexuals. I do consider their practices personally abhorrent and I surely cannot be blamed if the practice is sterile or that it has a long association with disease.

Homosexuality is widely condemned as sinful by most world cultures including Judaism and, as a Christian, I accept the need to condemn the sin but not the sinner.

In Exeter this issue has received prominence because Labour has selected an openly homosexual candidate. It is Labour's issue and not mine. Labour has caused this debate and not me. Since Members of Parliament actually make the laws which dictate personal behaviour and criminalise dangerous sexual behaviour then the personal proclivities of elected Members is a matter of legitimate public concern.

The campaign to deceive a generation of young people that homosexuality is normal is, in my view deeply to be regretted. Similarly the movement to consider AIDS sufferers as different and deserving of greater sympathy than those suffering from other fatal conditions has more to do with supporting homosexuality than really caring for sick people. All sick

people deserve care and compassion, none more than another.

Mr Parris was not in Exeter to hear the debate to which he refers or he would have heard me say that I would not criminalise homosexuality although I certainly would suppress its active promotion and display. He would also know that I am probably far less bigoted and far more tolerant of other persons' views than the homosexual lobby is of those who disapprove of their deviant proclivity.

Here stand common sense, tradition and medical fact and one person at least who is prepared to state in public what a silent and cowed majority knows to be true.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN ROGERS
(Conservative Prospective
Parliamentary Candidate for Exeter),
Exeter Conservative Association,
47a Magdalen Road, Exeter, Devon,
December 2.

From Mr Mike Carter

Sir, Must *The Times* be used by Matthew Parris to peddle and champion the cause of homosexuality? He accuses Dr Rogers of bigotry. According to my dictionary, a bigot is one who holds opinions irrespective of reason and attaches disproportionate weight to some creed or view — Matthew Parris I believe.

Yours sincerely,
MIKE CARTER,
49 West Drive, Leyland, Lancashire,
December 2.

Croatia and Serbia

From the President and
Chief Executive of the
International Crisis Group

Sir, I agree wholeheartedly with your leading article, "The egg revolution" (November 29), about the West's readiness to do business with the disreputable Presidents of Croatia and Serbia. By courting these two men the West has wasted a year in Bosnia and quite possibly will be seen to have thrown away the opportunity for peace that the Dayton agreement provided.

The Bosnia Peace Implementation Conference to be held in London on December 4-5 provides the last chance to rescue the Dayton accords. Our

leaders should break with the past, turn their backs on the present leadership in Croatia and Serbia and get serious about lending assistance to those who are now pushing for accountability, democratic elections and free media.

The key signal to the world that there has been a change of policy would be for those attending the implementation conference to commit themselves to the immediate extradition of indicted war criminals in both Serbia and Croatia.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS HINTON,
President and Chief Executive,
International Crisis Group,
3 Catherine Place, SW1,
November 29.

Gargoyles and plaques

From Mr N. L. Denton

Sir, My Oxford college, New College, lists donors to its development fund in the annual *New College Record* rather than commemorate them with plaques (report, November 19; letters, November 27), and the Warden holds occasional events to which donors are invited.

Last night I attended a reception in New College followed by a spirited performance of Handel's oratorio *Alexander's Feast* in the chapel. Such events are a far more worthwhile means of showing appreciation, and provide an excellent opportunity to meet other college members and to renew acquaintances.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL L. DENTON,
12 Maria Court,
Southcote Road, Reading, Berkshire,
November 28.

From Canon Ivor Davies

Sir, The church of Nantgwyllt in Radnorshire was built by the Birmingham Corporation at the end of the last century to replace one submerged by the Elan Valley reservoirs.

The stone heads on the walls of the nave represent the Apostles but were modelled on worthy members of the corporation. It is said that an unpopular alderman is immortalised as Judas Iscariot.

Yours faithfully,
IVOR DAVIES,
Holly Cottage,
6 The Cwm, Knighton, Powys,
December 1.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Attack on Cooke stirs up the fans

From Mr Brian Grove

Sir, I listened to Alistair Cooke's *Letter from America* on the American military and am amazed at the reactions to it (report, December 2).

Mr Cooke spoke seriously of a number of rape cases troubling the American Armed Services and ironically of attempts to make a military offence of wolf-whistling and suggestive glances. For commentators to link the statistics of the former with a comment on the latter is worthy of Dr Goebbels.

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN GROVE,
1 The Paragon, Blackheath, SE3,
December 2.

From Mr John H. Lamb

Sir, The unidentified BBC presenter who finds Mr Cooke's personality oppressive — "Because of his age and authority everybody is frightened of him" — should take comfort from knowing that his hurt feelings are but a small price he has to pay for the considerable pleasure that the end-products give to so many of his customers.

The letter in question was, as usual, an objective report on a topical issue, enlivened with subjective wit, to the effect that much reported "sexual harassment" is hardly sinful.

Of course times change and I, too, might be past my sell-by date. Only last year in Virginia, my rising to my feet when rejoined at table by a lady, brought her protest that such gallantry was both archaic and "gratuitously offensive".

Yours truly,
JOHN H. LAMB,
Walnut Tree House,
Upper Wear, Exbridge, Somerset,
December 3.

From Mr Robert Vincent

Sir, Surely Alistair Cooke's controversial remarks were no more sexist than Ms Bel Mooney's comment that "he is of a certain generation" is ageist?

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT VINCENT,
Dilly House,
Wildhorn, Andover, Hampshire,
December 2.

French lorry strike

From Mr George Guise

Sir, The success of the lorry drivers' actions in France (report, November 30) could be a foretaste of a Blairite Britain.

The French Government is interventionist by nature, regardless of the party in power, and is therefore liable to be held to ransom whenever unions are frustrated. Britain used to be like that and could become so again under the encouragement of a social chapter-orientated, Europhile Labour government.

France continues to have its many Scargills, both on the autoroutes and elsewhere, and it will never become a modern, free-market economy until it has its Thatcher.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE GUISE,
(Prime Minister's Policy Unit,
1986-90),
90 Long Acre, WC2,
December 2.

Italy's Latin revival

From Mr George Edwards

Sir, I suffered Latin (leading article, November 27) through most of my secondary school in the 1960s, and failed to learn it, despite desperate efforts to avoid almost weekly beatings.

Moving to Italy in the Eighties and working with young Italian graduates, I was intrigued to discover that they too had struggled, and failed, to learn it. Their views of Latin's value were far more disparaging, colourful, and forcefully expressed than mine.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE EDWARDS,
20 Fairways Drive,
Harrrogate, North Yorkshire,
November 27.

Millennium fountains

From Mr J. N. P. Watson

Sir, As a Horsham district resident may I point out to Mrs E. M. Thomas (letter, November 29) that the Shelley memorial fountain is not only unpopular locally for its ugliness and the fact that it does not work, but also because of its inappropriate significance (Shelley died from drowning).

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WATSON,
Pannett's,
Shipley, Horsham, West Sussex,
November 29.

We should be told

From Dr Patrick Moore

Sir, In his political sketch today, Matthew Parris described Rhodri Morgan, MP, as this windy, burbling, frizz-haired, crag-faced sub-Patrick Moore of a Labour spokesman on Wales.

What on earth does he mean?
Yours, etc.
PATRICK MOORE,
Farthings,
West Street, Selsey, Sussex,
December 3.

What does your child watch in the privacy of his room?

Forget blasphemy, worry about videos

One thing parents are unlikely to give their children for Christmas is a television set. What they do instead is give themselves a new one. The young ones acquire the cast-off by default and get something else as their real present.

The fact that nobody throws away a functioning television set explains why the majority of British households have two televisions. That families with children under 16 watch more television than the rest makes it understandable that 38 per cent of households with children should have three sets. The viewing tastes of the generations do not always coincide.

The Independent Television Commission survey which collected these and other fascinating statistics about viewing behaviour (did you know that the average viewer sits just under nine feet from the set?) has just confirmed what everybody suspected: that a large proportion of the extra sets land up in the children's bedrooms.

The trust placed in the nine o'clock watershed to mark the end of "family viewing" is therefore meaningless. Does anybody imagine that a self-possessed child, packed off to bed at a sensible hour, reaches towards the dark set, then mutters, "Better not, I need my sleep"? Or that parents, happy to have packed the kids off at last, stealthily tiptoe up to listen through the closed door to make sure that the little ones are not watching *Newsnight*?

Children are watching at all hours of the day and night. That is a fact of television life. That is why the channels that pour into the house uninvited — the so-called "free" channels — have to be policed to stricter standards than are applied to the cinema or to subscription channels. True enough, the judgments handed down by the television regulatory bodies are often overlapping and arbitrary. But someone has to act in loco parentis for those whose parents don't.

What we don't need is protection against blasphemy. Of all the British laws for the European Court of Human Rights to uphold last week the court, usually so zealous in the cause of free speech, ruled that Britain had been right to ban a short film which shows St. Teresa of Avila cavorting in the manner of Madonna (the one with the daughter). The court argued, overturning the advice of its own Commission of Human Rights, that *Visions of Ecstasy* would have caused great offence to millions of people.

The court might have spared a thought for the millions who are offended by a law which defines blasphemy in terms of one religion only. Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* was not exactly popular with a large and devout

section of the British population. Yet Britain has stoutly and expensively defended Rushdie's right to write it those who were offended were asked to respect the views of those who were not.

Surely what is sauce for the Muslims should be sauce for the Christians? In a multicultural, increasingly secular society, blasphemy law should go the way of censorship of books and plays — a quaint relic, like the man with the red flag in front of the motor car, of what used to frighten us.

There is still, however, a consensus that pictures are more dangerous than words. With that comes a general acceptance of film censorship. In line with this perceived sliding scale of danger, films are permitted much more latitude than are TV programmes.

The difference between the two media is the box office. We go out to a special place and buy a ticket. We know what we are going to see. If the British Board of Film Classification rating is "18", we know we can expect to see clothes and limbs come off. If the film has been made by Quentin Tarantino and we did not like seeing the policeman's ear sliced off in *Reservoir Dogs*, we can join another queue and swear that nothing or nobody will force us to see his subsequent (alleged) masterpiece, *Pulp Fiction*.

But we should not call, as Bruce Gynell, of Yorkshire-Tyne Tees, does, for the film *Crash* to be banned from cinemas because necrophilia is contrary to family values. Films are an art form. Those who would censor them run the risk of banning a *Coriolanus* or *Oedipus Rex*. Where they should concentrate their efforts instead is on seeing that films unsuitable for home entertainment are not sold or rented as videos.

This is not a case of *Something Must Be Done*. Something has been done. British law already requires the BBFC to be far stricter in classifying films for video distribution than for cinemas. It snips and cuts to get controversial films in suitable form, bearing in mind that children may be viewing. There are criminal penalties for traders who ignore its rules. If there is one aspect of British puritanism to be proud of when continental start laughing at us, it is this.

On Friday the BBFC will deliver to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, the report he requested on what progress is being made in reducing the level of violence in videos. There's one recommendation the report may overlook. In the child's bedroom the responsible parent may allow a television set, but never a video cassette player.



BRENDA MADDOX

Fun, fun, fun, in the canteen

THE search is on for the most wretched Christmas office party in Fleet Street. The competition is tough. The tradition among newspapers to troop back to Fleet Street for some misty-eyed wassailing for old time's sake seems to have been abandoned in favour of more low-key celebrations closer to the office.

Fiers Morgan is taking his *Daily Mirror* hacks no further than Café Rouge at Canary Wharf. The *Daily Mail* is off to Jinnies, the wine bar round the corner from its Kensington workplace. Reporters at *The Sunday Telegraph* have been moaning that theirs is the most miserable lot. They are destined for a pub in Rotherhithe for a lunchtime celebration. This is not only inescapable (it is being held on a work day), but appears to be taking on a 1970s theme with a menu of prawn cocktail, turkey and Black Forest gateau.

But the most cost-conscious event looks likely to be tonight's drinks party thrown by Richard Addis, Editor of *The Express*, for his minions. This

will feature a yuletide address by Stephen Grabiner, the executive director, and will take place in the staff canteen. The *Times* own Christmas party was held last weekend at the very grand Reform Club, tickets £12.50 a head.

Superhusband

JONATHAN ROSS, dashing host of Saturday's British Comedy Awards, should have been collecting a prize himself by all accounts — for being New Man of 1996.

Ever the consummate professional, Wosley managed to hide from millions of viewers that for the past week he had been looking after Jane, his pregnant wife, and their two children single-handed and getting by on just three hours' sleep a night.

Hardened hacks were almost moved to tears by the Ross family's plight since his Jane, 26, tried to put up some Ikea shelves and slipped the baby was well but Jane, a novelist, is temporarily incapacitated. She turned up to the awards in a wheelchair and was tended to by the stressed but devoted Jonathan.

"Jane is pregnant and she got the old nesting instinct," Ross says. "While she was fixing together a cabinet she did her back in. She is in a lot



Ross: New Man of 1996



Birt: too tired to read

of pain. I've hardly had a minute's sleep all week."

IT MAY be a tough job being Director-General of the BBC, but it is clearly not one to keep you awake at night fretting about licence fees or ITV's Christmas schedules. At a drinks party the other day, John Birt was bemoaning the lack of quality time he gets to spend with his books.

"I don't have any time for leisure reading," he said. "The only time I manage to get stuck into a good book is when I'm on holiday and then I concentrate on re-reading the classics."

off to run Radio 5 Live, is Jon Barton. The Derby-born Barton, 46, has a proven track record in radio but has also worked on *Newsnight* and *Breakfast Time* and has most recently been Editor of the 1 o'clock and 6 o'clock News.

He arrives at a tough time with a general election approaching and is understood not to be relishing the often furious arguments with politicians that are part of the job. Despite this, he says, "Today has never been afraid to ask the really difficult questions and pursue them rigorously. The coming election will test these qualities to the full."

Great theme pubs

THE marketing men at Whitbread have hit on a brilliant idea to promote the image of dear Old Blighty. Under a project titled "English Pubs Abroad", dozens of Dog and Ducks, King's Heads and Red Lions — flowing with Boddingtons and Flowers Ales — will be popping up all over Europe and America. The idea is to produce traditional English-style taverns on the lines of the successful Irish theme pubs in the UK. "The opportunity and potential for English pubs is huge," a Whitbread spokesman says. Presumably we can now expect to see a huge export in stale cheese sandwiches and warm beer.

Radio return

MORE often than not these days, radio journalists seem to be straining at the leash to escape into television. Heartening them that one of the BBC's most senior executives is making a switch the other way. The new Editor of the *Today* programme, taking over from Roger Mosey who is

Playing a short game

SCARY findings from a new report suggest that the average company marketing director lasts less time in his or her job than a football manager.

The study, by the research specialists DMS, also corroborates the theory that when a marketing director moves on, so does advertising business. When 383 marketing directors switched companies between January 1995 and June 1996, 320 companies' advertising accounts were also reviewed.

All this flies in the face of industry wisdom, which suggests that good advertising springs from lengthy relationships between client and agency. The study also indicates that agencies' time and effort spent researching a brand and thoroughly understanding a client's business are becoming increasingly devalued.

"Is it any wonder the agency world is reluctant to invest heavily in running

an account when that same account is likely to walk after only a few months?" asked one disgruntled adman.

BT has lined up a series of former *EastEnders* actors to star in one of the first new ads to be broadcast after the departure of frontman Bob Hoskins next month. The one-off commercial will show Leslie Grantham, Tom Watt, Letitia Dean and Susan Tully — alias Dirty Den, Lofly, Sharon and Michelle — keeping in touch by phone now that they no longer meet in the Queen Vic.

Sources claim the ad may be followed by similar ones featuring Hilda Ogden from *Coronation Street*, or Sheila Grant from *Brookside*. Sholto Douglas-Horne, head of ad-

vertising at BT's personal communications division, says: "We're very excited about the *EastEnders* ad, and we hope it proves to be very entertaining."

A TOPTEN agency recently had to lay off 18 staff — about 5 per cent of its workforce — to "prepare itself for 1997". The news provided grim food for thought across adland, which has been spared any significant staff cutbacks since the recession.

Unhappily, however, there are now mutterings that other agencies are also preparing the way for their own raft of redundancies. "The business is static. There is not a huge return of confidence in advertising and we are not anticipating any enormous upturn for next year," said one observer.

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Paul Nathanson
She's just like a diamond sparkling but hard

A split vein

PA

Char box-o

Paul Nathanson meets Sue Farr, the tough new head of marketing at the BBC

'She's just like a diamond, sparkling but hard'

Sue Farr is about as close to the image of a BBC mandarin as Alf Garnett is to a City slicker. Farr, the corporation's newly appointed marketing supremo responsible for television and radio, would make Lord Reith's eyebrows bristle. A Jimmy Nail and Chris Evans fan, who reads Jilly Cooper and wears tight, bright skirts with black tights, she is more Annabel's than Broadcasting House, and in the age of digital television and DAB radio, she confesses to being useless with gadgets and cannot turn her radio. Don't be deceived by appearances, Farr is about to give the BBC a good kick in the marketing rump to ward off the ever fiercer competition.

'The enemy is at the gate. We must take them on'

"When the barbarians are at the gate, people huddle together for warmth," she says. "The BBC now realises that the enemy is without and that they've got to take on major players in the market who are very professional." She is too canny to spell it out, but one senses that Farr thinks the corporation has under-sold television and that marketing is only now being embraced. "I am now confident that marketing is a discipline coming up the agenda in the BBC and everyone is taking it increasingly seriously. My aim is to find out what drives the public's listening and viewing habits and understand the role our television channels and radio networks play in people's lives."

Also jumping ship were Nick Elliott, head of drama series, David Liddiment, the light entertainment chief, and Liz Forgan, the head of radio.

Then, at this summer's Edinburgh Television Festival, farcical stories were banded off Alan Yentob, former Controller of BBC1, walking into a meeting with a glass of brandy and walking out again not to return for the rest of the day, while Michael Jackson, the head of BBC2, conducted meetings without his shoes on.

Farr neatly sidesteps the problem without denying it. "That's not my remit," she says. "That's for the corporate centre."

What I want to do is make the BBC a very potent force with its huge combination of talent and energy. And it must be a team effort.

How she plans to do this just a few weeks into her job she will not say, but her track record suggests she will succeed.

She has relaunched Radios 1 and 5 and she was behind the high-profile Proms in the Park this summer, when more than 30,000 people went to Hyde Park on the Last Night of the Proms.

According to colleagues, her weapons to disarm cynics and intellectual chauvinists who may not like the unholy whiff of the former advertising executive about her, will be charm and astuteness.

Robin Wright, her former boss at the advertising agency Wright Collins, "Fatherhood Son", says: "In a world where people are abrasive, Sue is extremely user-friendly and nice, which is rare in advertising. But she's also very shrewd and a communication diplomat."

I worked at the BBC myself and Sue will have to deal with and win over a lot of rival baronies. "She'll have to convince them that the whole is more important than the individual parts. But she can handle complex arguments and people so if anyone can do it, she can."

Chris McLaughlin, a former colleague of Farr when he was director of corporate affairs at BBC Enterprises, adds: "Sue's strength was being able to decide which of the countless meetings were useful and she simply did not turn up at the others. She's like the diamond on her finger: sparkling but hard."

Jonathan Shier, the former deputy chief executive and her boss at Thames Television, which she joined after stints with Northern Foods, Dorlands, CDP and WCRS, recalls: "In the advertising world Sue was known as the best meter



Sue Farr: more Annabel's than Broadcasting House — with a mixture of charm and astuteness

Enterprises, adds: "Sue's strength was being able to decide which of the countless meetings were useful and she simply did not turn up at the others. She's like the diamond on her finger: sparkling but hard."

and greater in the business. She has the style and presence which will be vital in an organisation where a whole series of fiefdoms will require merging to reach a common goal. She'll need to dig her heels in and her Yorkshireness will be a great asset."

Farr, who is married to a chartered surveyor, has no children and describes her only hobby as horseriding. She was born and raised in Sheffield and claims her

roots have made her stubborn, down-to-earth and proud. The daughter of a dentist, she went from Sheffield High School for Girls to Reading University where she got a 2.1 in English and politics.

Marketing seduced her with its energy and creativity and she later learnt from her mentor Robin Wright that given passion and conviction, anything is possible.

To defeat the barbarians at the gates and the barons within, she will need every ounce of both.

First Raspberry Ripple given to Disney film

A new award judges media portrayal of the disabled, Jason Nissé reports

The final scene of Disney's version of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* has brought tears to the eyes of millions of children. Not surprisingly, Hollywood was unimpressed with Victor Hugo's ending, where Esmerelda kills herself. Instead we see her falling in love with a handsome hero while Quasimodo walks into the sunset hand-in-hand with a child.

It is not a scene that pleases the One-in-Eight Group, which lobbies for a better representation of disabled people in the media. So last night, at an award ceremony at Channel 4's London offices, the Disney film received the first ever Raspberry Ripple — given for the worst portrayal of disabled people in a feature film.

"This is a film which will affect children a great deal," says Richard Reiser, the driving force behind One-in-Eight. "But it contains disturbing scenes, including one where Quasimodo is crowned the Prince of Fools, and a changed ending, which reinforces the myth of a disabled person being a perpetual child."

Hunchback beat off stiff competition from the Hollywood blockbusters *Forrest Gump* and *Scent of a Woman* as well as Sir Ian McKellen's *Richard III* for worst film. It is one of six categories of Ripple, along with best film (*Four Weddings and a Funeral* for the portrayal of Hugh Grant's deaf brother), best and worst television drama and best and worst non-fiction programmes.

The shortlist and the winners came not only from members of the One-in-Eight group but also readers of the listing magazine *Time Out*, and the specialist publication *Disability Arts in London*. The best Ripples were hardly controversial. Despite strong competition from *Grange Hill*, the BBC series *Our Friends in the North*, a four-part series of *A Touch of Frost* and the *Brookside* episodes involving the heart search where the Farnhams' unborn baby was found to have Down's syndrome, the winner was the BBC2 drama *Skillingrigg*.

It was praised for using disabled actors in all but one of the central roles. Reiser is incensed when able actors play disabled people, as Tom Hanks did in *Gump* or Al Pacino in *Scent of a Woman*.

"These actors see it as a tour de force and use it as a theatrical device," he argues. "You would not see black characters used in the same way. These days the idea of Sir Laurence Olivier blacking up to play Othello is just not on."

Similarly few could argue with the documentary shortlist. The winner of the best non-fiction was another BBC2 series, *Old School Ties*, which showed the problems disabled people have in education. The series beat, among others, the BBC's coverage of the Paralympics, which treated it as a regular event at the end of the Olympics.

However, the Ripple for worst non-fiction could not be more controversial. It went to the 1995 edition of *Children in Need on BBC1*. Voters found its use of disabled children patronising, making them a target for pity. One member of the group said she did not want her disabled daughter to be considered a "child in need". Other candidates were Jeremy Paxman's *You Decide*, which failed to invite any disabled people into its debate on eugenics, and *The Visit*, with Desmond Wilcox, which was considered extremely patronising.

The worst television drama stood out as *Taggart*. The show featured a disabled woman as Taggart's wife, but when he died this character disappeared. The recent series *Dead* had four episodes where the baddies included a blind man, a man with one arm and a mad woman. "This perpetuated the myth that disabled people are evil," says Reiser.

Another show that has had positive disabled characters in the past but was singled out was *Casualty*. The episode nominated, shown in September 1995, had a man with learning difficulties killing an innocent victim.

Other candidates — *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders* — were chosen because they did not have any disabled characters. When it was pointed out to the producers of *EastEnders* that 14 per cent of people in Tower Hamlets and Hackney have disabilities, the answer was "we do not want to turn it into a freak show."

One-in-Eight plans to make the awards an annual event, and to widen them by setting up a monitoring panel, which will catch television and film patronising, ridiculing or merely ignoring disabled people in the community. The awards are supported by a host of celebrities. Last night Gary Kemp, Lindsay Duncan, Richard Wilson, Corin Redgrave and *Brookside* star Gabrielle Glaister made an appearance.

One-in-Eight can be contacted at 78 Midway Grove, London N1 4PR. Tel: 071 254 1977



Quasimodo in the film

A split verdict on the Mirror

Kicking Piers Morgan, the 31-year-old Editor of the *Daily Mirror* — whose proud motto was once publish and be damned — is becoming such a Fleet Street sport that a few rival editors say privately that the vicious attacks on him are becoming unfair.

Only a few months ago, Morgan was damned after publishing the notorious "Achtung! Surrender" front page before England's Euro 96 match with Germany. Now he is being damned for not publishing a story and surrendering one of the greatest scoops of the century — the full details of the 1996 Budget — to Downing Street. The classic definition of the journalist's creed, was written by John Thaddeus Delane, the Editor of *The Times*, in 1852. "The first duty of the press," he said, "is to obtain the earliest intelligence of the events of the time, and, instantly, by disclosing them, to make them the common property of the nation."

On Delane's test, Morgan stands convicted of failing in the first duty of journalism, a still more serious conviction

given that *The Sun*, his nearest rival, obtained details from the documents after the Downing Street surrender and published them. Yet the verdict of guilty was certainly not unanimous among current or former Fleet Street editors.

Most would have published, including the Editors of *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*. *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*, but only after establishing that the documents were authentic and had been obtained by legitimate means.

At *The Times*, the Editor, Peter Stothard, whose first major scoop was a leak of the 1981 Budget, says he would have written the story himself if necessary. But he would not have paid for the documents, alerted the Government, or returned them.

Simon Jenkins, his immediate predecessor agreed, but William Rees-Mogg,

who edited *The Times* from 1967 to 1981, did not. The main question for Lord Rees-Mogg was whether the documents revealed impropriety or deception by the Government — and whether he was publishing the details for the benefit of his readers or only

would have been horrendous. Yesterday Mr Morgan was still defending his decision passionately and accusing his critics — one of whom was offered the story and rejected it — of being wise after the event.

"Can you tell me that any editor would have published this story not knowing where it had come from and who it was from?" he asked. Given that the leak could not be authenticated (the criterion insisted upon by all the other editors) and that he feared a hoax, he had acted responsibly. So why the condemnation?

Yet it is on precisely that point of authentication that Stewart Steven, who edited both *The Mail on Sunday* and the *Evening Standard*, seized in his condemnation of Mr Morgan. If the only way Piers Morgan knew of authenticating a document was by checking with the press of-

fice at Downing Street, it showed the folly of appointing 31-year-old showbusiness journalists as editors of national newspapers, he said, adding that Mr Morgan had fluffed a superb opportunity.

Around Fleet Street, many journalists believe that Mr Morgan was constrained by the three former Fleet Street editors who head the Mirror Group's management and who are anxious not to upset shareholders — David Montgomery, who edited the *News of the World* and *Today*, Charles Wilson, once Editor of *The Times*, and Kelvin MacKenzie, the legendary former Editor of *The Sun*.

The rumour is strongly denied by Mr Morgan. He consulted Mr Montgomery and Mr Wilson but says the decision against publication was his alone. Yet it is not only former Mirror men who are asking whether the decision was a signal of a group that has lost its self-confidence, which is directed by managers and editors who are not instinctive gut supporters of the Labour Party, and which is still steadily falling behind *The Sun*.



PAPER ROUND Brian MacArthur

to outdo his competitors. Mike Molloy, a former Editor of the *Mirror*, saw anarchy at work — newspapers were not in the business of bringing down governments unless scandal or wickedness was involved. For Sir Nicholas Lloyd, who edited the *Daily Express* until last year, the main issue was that the documents had not been obtained by journalistic skill but stolen. Simply checking would have brought down an injunction, says his successor Richard Addis, and the backlash

Charity begins at the box-office for cinema

IMAGINE a feature film in which the actors, scriptwriters, producers and technicians all worked for free and that, if the movie became a box-office success, the profits did not go to the film moguls but to charity. Yet, unlikely as it may seem in the days of multi-billion-dollar film budgets, this very project has just been launched in Britain.

Reelchair, an organisation set up by a freelance journalist, a US scriptwriter and an advertising agency, aims to make a feature film whose proceeds will be donated to

wheelchair users' charities throughout the world. The organisation "was inspired by the disabled *Superman* actor Christopher Reeve's speech at this year's Academy Awards, where he called for the film industry to put social issues before box office profits. It aims to make

the movie in the spirit of Live Aid. The idea was devised by a London journalist Sunjay Kakar, 29, who asked Carole Parick, an NBC writer, to produce a treatment. The official *Reelchair* logo was created by the advertising agency Bates Dorland.

"We want to make people more aware of disability in general and thought that if we could make a really entertaining film about wheelchair users we could show it doesn't necessarily have to be a boring subject," said Mr Kakar, who is now busy recruiting volunteers.

"The idea is that everyone will work for free. It will be an innovative way to discover bright new talents."

The film, *Rebel Yell*, tells the story of a group of friends who form a band and sneak off to the city to make their fortune. When they get an audition they are advised to "lose" the bass player who is in a wheelchair. The decision creates dissension in the band and drives a wedge between them. The script is expected to be finished by March.

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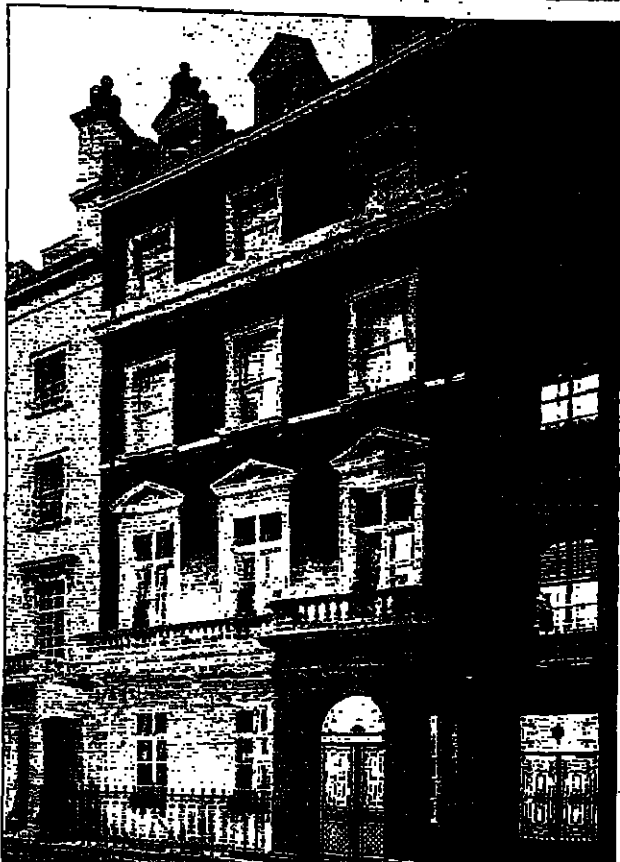
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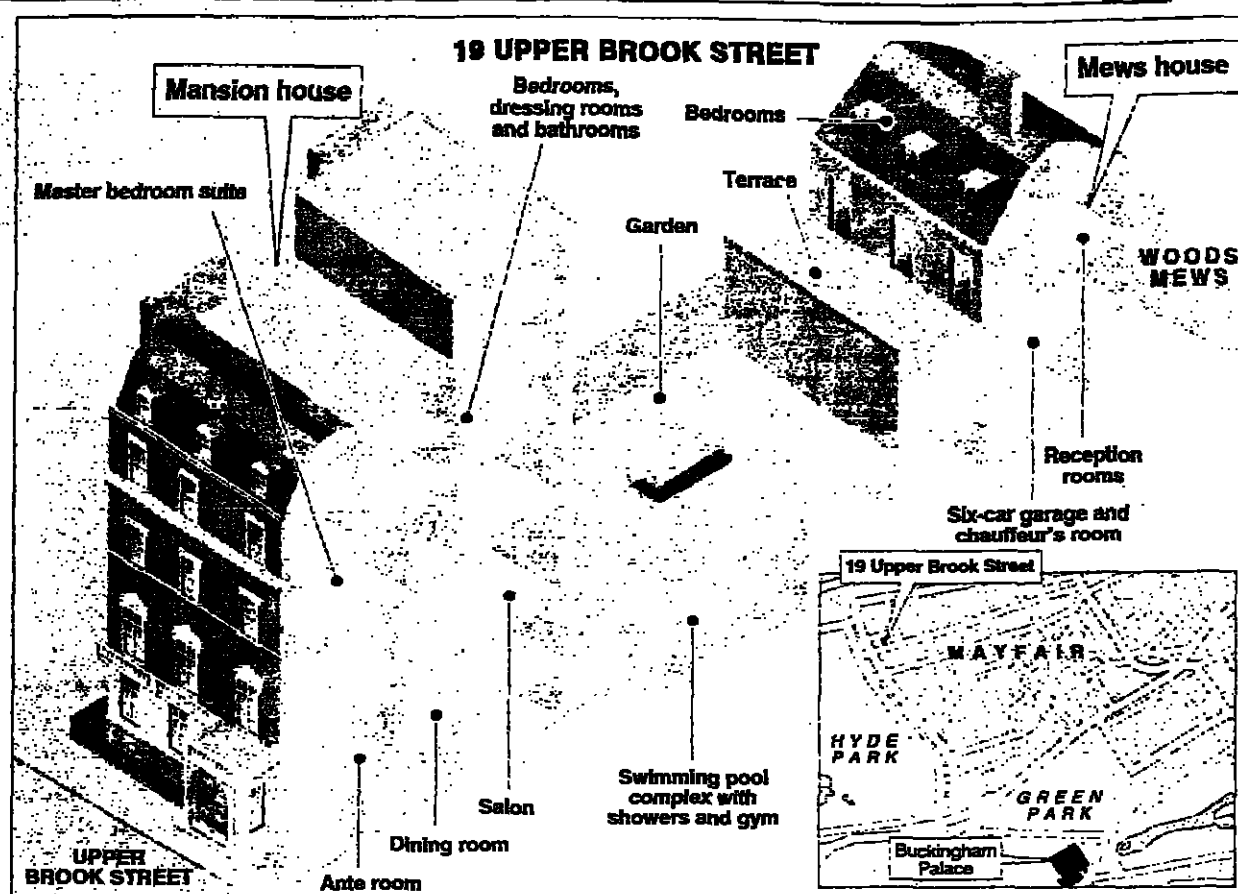
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Rachel Kelly on the growing appeal of joint properties at the top end of the London market



19 Upper Brook Street is available for £8.75 million



Every mansion needs its mews

Once it was commonplace, but now it is among the ultimate metropolitan status symbols, to own not only a mansion but its adjoining mews house, too.

Houses once separated from their mews are now being sold jointly. The market has changed, the grander agents say. Once there was more value in selling the properties separately. Now the desire for security and privacy has become paramount among the very rich looking for what has been dubbed "unreal estate", and has led to a premium for double sales.

Avril Butt, from De Groot Collis, is among the Mayfair agents with her finger on the pulse of the top end of the market. "For big houses to achieve premium prices now, they need their mews with them. The mews gives room for garaging and staff or guests, and it makes the house more secure. Security is becoming a bigger and bigger priority, especially for foreigners."

Traditionally, "mews" referred to the royal stables in London, so called because they were built where the king's hawks were once "mewed" or confined. They were designed to

separate the classes by their architecture: often small, dark and plain, they contrasted with the luxury they backed on to. They housed servants above and horses below.

By the turn of the century, many had become run-down and seedy. The arrival of the car hastened their demise and many became lock-ups or business premises. But they revived in the 1920s when they became the fashionable haunts of celebrities and bachelors. Now there are only rare mews left in London that are still stables: 34 Bathurst Mews services the needs of the Hyde Park Riding School.

After the war, developers tended to sell the two properties separately, making London town houses vulnerable to burglaries from their unprotected flanks. "A mews obviously looks back to the main house and adds extra security and privacy, being part of the same property," Ms Butt says. "One cannot be precise about how much value is added to a house by a mews, but it adds a lot. A main house without its mews is less saleable and undoubtedly less valuable. There are very few still with their original main houses."

Philip Green, an agent from Goldschmidt & Howland, is convinced that the full package is better value. "We value the house and the mews separately and we usually reckon that one and one make three."

A crop of houses with their adjoining mews have come up for sale to meet demand, many in Belgravia and Mayfair, where Westminster council is keen to establish more residential use as temporary office permissions expire.

No 23 Cavendish Close is on sale through Goldschmidt & Howland for £2.4 million. Chesterfield is selling 21 and 26 Culross Street with a joint garage for £2.25 million and John D Wood is selling 21 St Petersburg Place in Bayswater for £1.5 million, which has a small adjoining house in Chapel Side.

The early 18th-century townhouses at 19, 20 and 23 Upper Brook Street are typical. Built for Georgian yuppies in 1725, they have been used as offices since the Second World War. Now they have been converted back into houses with their four adjacent mews houses by the developers, Scotleand.

Three windows wide, and four storeys high, No 19 Upper Brook Street was built in 1737, is Grade II listed, and is on the market for £8.75 million for a 101-year lease. In its time it has been home to the 3rd Viscount

Doneraile (between 1742 and 1744), Sir Charles Hotham 6th Bt (a groom to the bedchamber) and the Brazilian Embassy between 1921 and 1940. As well as its seven bedrooms, air-conditioning, which is everywhere apart from the staff quarters, and sumptuous Empire-style interiors with a marble-paved entrance hall, the buyer will enjoy its four-bedroom mews house in Woods Mews with its

complex. Then, of course, people have a useful source of extra income should they rent them out."

Of course there will remain a market for the single mews house which provides a certain child-free sophistication for a lifestyle, in the words of one agent, "more Emma Peel and Porsche."

Mews have a raffish reputation ever since Peter Rafterman bought a house in Bryanston Mews as a birthday present for Mandy Rice-Davies. The plethora of the 1960s and 1970s decor, which still remains in many a mews, shows that their heyday was at the height of Swinging London. Today the bachelor in search of the perfect pad is attracted by the garaging in particular. Tough parking restrictions have driven up mews prices. "When we value a mews house, garage space is as expensive as the living area," says Antoine Lurot, of the London Mews Company, who estimates there are about 10,000 mews houses in London. "We have sold houses to people who collect vintage cars. Often the car in the garage is worth more than the house."

Additional research by Chris Porter.

'A main house without its mews is less saleable'

Wardour Castle, two centuries on

Rachel Kelly on the development of a Grade I Palladian mansion

Councillors have given the go-ahead for Wardour Castle, the Grade I Palladian mansion in Wiltshire, to be restored with the help of unrealised designs by the original 18th-century architect, Richard Woods.

Salisbury District Council has approved the final phase in restoration which includes the construction of four houses in a walled garden mimicking the old pineapple houses or pineries.

For the past four years developers have been working on restoring what is one of Britain's greatest 18th-century houses into nine flats, two of which have been sold and six let at about £20,000 a year. Nigel Tursley, the developer, spent two years with English Heritage to determine the exact design of the pineries as a basis for their authentic restoration.

Salisbury planners also approved the building of nine houses and two flats in a courtyard based on Woods's 1776 proposals for a stable block to the west of the house, and an indoor swimming pool built within Woods's proposed orangery.

"Of course the plans have had to be adapted," Mr Tursley says. When Woods suggested improvements, the park covered 700 acres. Mr Tursley has just 53 acres of parkland.

The plans have met some local opposition. At the council meeting, members heard

that there had been a petition and 62 letters of objection to the plans, and 28 of support. The plans were scaled down from Mr Tursley's original scheme excluding a dower house, garages and mews houses, which were seen as the most controversial aspects. Councillors argued that the new homes would generate enough money to complete the restoration of the walled garden, Wardour Castle itself, and the camellia house.

The plans may yet be called in by John Gummer, the Secretary of State for the Environment. Robert Key, the MP for Salisbury, said he would ask the Government to decide the matter by public inquiry. Mr Key says: "The Secretary of State is now in a position to decide whether to call in the application. It is my view that the buildings are of such significant national importance that they should be considered at national level."

The house is a textbook Georgian mansion. It was built between 1770 and 1776. According to the Pevsner architectural guide, it has the most glorious Georgian interior in Wiltshire, which includes a circular staircase. There is a huge chapel in the west wing, and in the east wing is a kitchen so large that the ladies of the Arundel family, who once owned the house, are said to have had their first riding lessons around the kitchen table.



Wardour Castle, Wiltshire: a glorious Georgian interior

Homes of the style leaders

Amanda Loose examines how two interior design advisers decorate their own houses

We slavishly try to imitate the flawless interiors featured in the glossy magazines they edit, but how do interior designers decorate their own homes?

Ilse Crawford is the editor of *Elle Decoration* and lives with her dog William in Bloomsbury in London. She says that the flat's colour scheme is dictated by her marmalade-coloured pouch, snoring in the spare bedroom. "It's all a matter of constantly editing yourself," Ms Crawford says. "Stick to the essentials. Select objects you most care about, and make them the centre of your colour and design scheme. Add a simple colour scheme to hold all the disparate shades and styles together, and bin-80."

Ms Crawford's home is not just a haven for sleeping dogs, it is also an extension of her office. More and more of us are now working at least partly from home, she says.

"Work is now changing, and so are homes. I like to spend time at home in the mornings, thinking time. My sitting room/office is so light and lovely, that work doesn't seem like work," she says.



Julia Watson's colour scheme was inspired by old prints

Ms Crawford's airy Georgian flat has tables from Bali, a Zulu footstool and silver storage jars from Yemen, which blend with the Georgian and contemporary English pieces. Clean whites dominate the decor and furnishings, while the pictures of sculptures pick up the warm brown shades of the wooden floor and scatter cushions. "Using different textures is important," says Ms Crawford. "They make a room more human. Interiors should also have a sense of humour as well as luxury."

She is currently trying a fun fake-fur blanket from Scandinavia for *Elle Decoration*. We are now more relaxed about decorating, Ms Crawford says. "In the 1980s we were anxious about getting everything just right, but we are no longer slaves to co-ordination, and feel relaxed enough to mix something unusual in if we like it."

Her home might be minimal, but the clean lines of Georgian panelling and large sash windows contribute to the sense of spaciousness. "It's not a contradiction. Georgian architecture is really very modern, with clean lines and

blues and beiges. Your home is very much part of your personality, so it is no good being in a 'show' room where you feel uncomfortable."

"Schemes are better when you don't stick rigidly to one palette; when you mess them up a little it brings the room alive," Ms Watson says. She concludes by saying: "It's like my mother used to say when she went out for the evening. 'Just before you leave the house, pause in front of the mirror and take just one ornament off. You will have the perfect balance.'"

Julia Watson is editor of *Homes & Gardens* and agrees. She has based the colour scheme of her home in Clapham, south London, on three Chinese prints which were her father's. The sense of spaciousness of the room belies its smallness and the many treasures displayed. "I am just like one of the readers of *Homes & Gardens*," Ms Watson says. "I feel that I don't have a talent for decorating and need to learn. One of my favourite features is our decorating from scratch section, with a step-by-step guide and before and after



Isle Crawford says we no longer co-ordinate everything

plain colours," Ms Crawford adds. "There is a myth that you should decorate in one style, but by following your instincts and using neutral colours, which are very forgiving, you can mix traditional and contemporary styles, which look great together."

"These days women who work have no time to keep up traditional high-maintenance homes."

Ms Crawford feels her approach to interiors is a bit like that of a fashion editor to clothes. "Just as they tend to wear black, I am very aware of the changing shifts in taste, but I am also conscious that I have got to find things which have meaning for me as well as being up to date," she says.

"A home is about longer-term values and is a very personal place."

Julia Watson is editor of *Homes & Gardens* and agrees. She has based the colour scheme of her home in Clapham, south London, on three Chinese prints which were her father's. The sense of spaciousness of the room belies its smallness and the many treasures displayed. "I am just like one of the readers of *Homes & Gardens*," Ms Watson says. "I feel that I don't have a talent for decorating and need to learn. One of my favourite features is our decorating from scratch section, with a step-by-step guide and before and after

'Interiors should have humour as well as luxury'

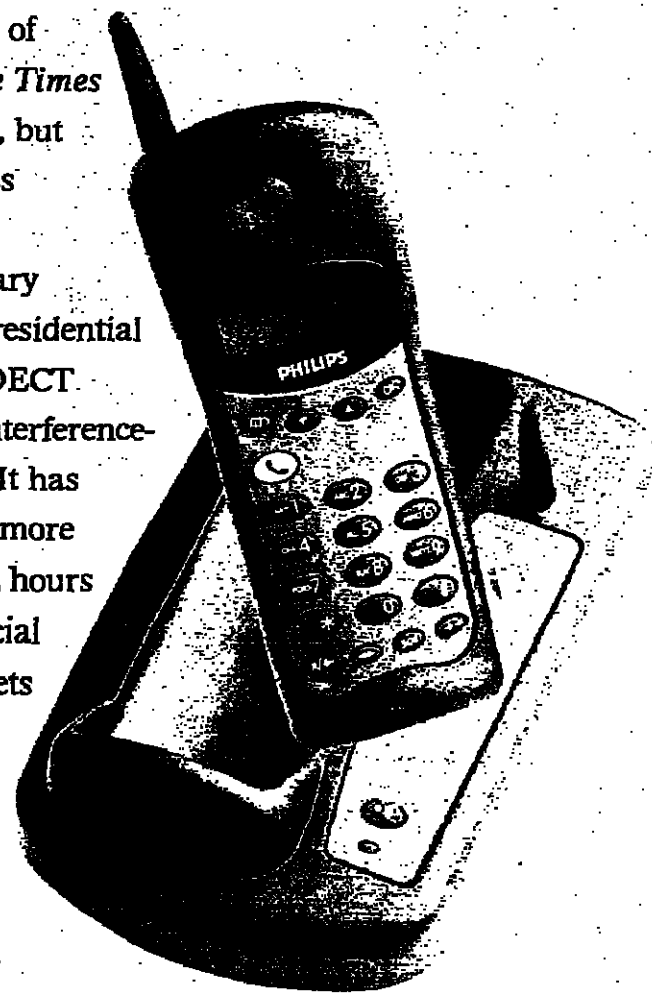
shots," she says. But her home has the quiet and timeless interior which Ms Watson believes her readers are aiming for. From the beige checked arm chair, she points out the wooden chair in the corner; above, is a picture of her grandfather sitting in the same chair. Her sitting room is held together by the beige, cream and blues of the Chinese prints. "One of the things I have learnt from the stylists at *Homes & Gardens* is how essential it is to create interesting groups of objects. I am aware of the far corner of the room which you see as soon as you enter. So I have grouped pictures there, and vaguely lined them up with the fireplace," she says. "I started with the prints and then found a Nina Campbell blind which reflected the

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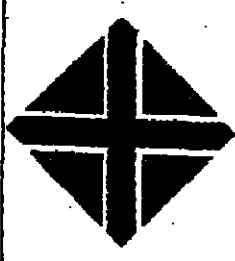
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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4 1996

LucasVarity shake-up will hit 8,000 jobs

By MARTIN BAKER

LUCASVARTY, the Anglo-American automotive components group, is to shed 3,000 jobs worldwide over the next two years, in an effort to reduce costs. Business employing a further 5,000 people are to be sold.

The wide-ranging restructuring, which follows the merger of Britain's Lucas Industries and America's Varity Corporation this year, will give rise to total exceptional charges of £250 million, it was announced yesterday.

The company was unable to say how many of the jobs cut were likely to fall in the UK, but a spokesman said that "a guide figure would be around 1,500 jobs, reflecting the fact that approximately half LucasVarity's workforce is in the UK". British unions took a broadly supportive view of LucasVarity's proposals.

John Allen, executive council member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, accepted the necessity of the cuts and efficiencies package. "It will ensure that our members have a positive future. The bulk of the jobs will go through natural wastage, but we expect to be involved in full discussions on the likely impact on our members," he said.

The restructuring is expected to boost LucasVarity's operating profits by £120 million, and will roughly double the economies envisaged at the time of the Lucas-Varity merger in September.

An exceptional charge of £120 million will be made to cover the cost of implementing the savings measures. Lucas-

Varity will also take a further exceptional, mainly non-cash, charge of £130 million, comprised principally of asset write-downs.

The total charge of £250 million will be recorded in the accounting period ending January 31, 1997.

In addition, the company has identified 13 candidates for disposal from among the many smaller companies within the merged group. The

Tempus 28

combined annual turnover of the businesses concerned is some £270 million, approximately 6 per cent of group turnover. The companies to be sold account for around 5,000 employees out of a company total of 56,000. LucasVarity hopes that the 3,000 additional jobs to be shed will disappear mainly through retirement and attrition.

The restructuring was welcomed by the City. Robert



Rice: planned divestment

Speed, director of research at Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "That £120 million saving on jobs is a pretty chunky number given the amount of jobs involved. It seems most likely that many of the cuts will come in continental Europe, probably in the brakes division."

John Buckland, an engineering analyst at Daiwa Institute of Research, said: "The company has said there's potential for further cost-cutting after 1999... the merger seems to be working."

Victor Rice, chief executive of LucasVarity, said the 13 businesses to be divested were "in general... profitable concerns" with many being "leaders in their sectors". Only eight of the 13 sale candidates have been named; the rest are expected to be disclosed "when legal and contractual arrangements permit".

Among the identified candidates for sale are Lucas Heavy Products (UK), a starters and alternators manufacturer; Lucas Industrial Components (UK), a precision components manufacturer; Lucas Assembly & Test Systems, an Anglo-American fuel, engine and transmission system concern; and Lucas Nitrotec, an Anglo-French specialist metal surface treatment company. Companies in South Africa, Greece and Argentina are also to be sold.

LucasVarity shares fell 16.5p, to 234p. Although analysts gave a broadly favourable response to the restructuring, some doubts were expressed about the immediate trading prospects.



Peter Kindersley warned the markets about the implications of a strong pound on profits at Dorling Kindersley

Sterling beats a hasty retreat

By JANET BUSH AND CLARE STEWART

THE pound soared to its best levels since it left the European exchange-rate mechanism in September 1992, but then plunged dramatically as Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, acknowledged for the first time that British industry is beginning to worry about sterling's strength.

In overnight markets, the pound had surged four pence against the mark to DM2.6370 in New York. But once trading began in London, sterling retreated again with stunning speed. By the close, it had fallen to DM2.5750, a vertical fall of six pence.

So spectacular was the reversal that rumours swept the currency markets that the Bank of England had been

selling the pound. Traders, who have made huge profits as the pound jumped by 10 per cent in about a month, were cashing in, encouraged as the day wore on by comments from British officials.

In late afternoon, the pound lurched down when Mr Clarke told Parliament that "large numbers of British industries are beginning to get worried that we might get too strong".

Shares in Dorling Kindersley, the publishing group, slumped 8p to 437.5p, wiping almost 16 per cent off the group's value, after a warning about the impact of sterling's strength against the dollar. Peter Kindersley, chairman and chief executive, said that,

if the pound were to stay at about \$1.69 until the financial year-end in June, turnover and pre-tax profit would be reduced by about £5 million and £1.6 million respectively. Analysts have cut their profit forecasts from £22 million for the year to the end of June to about £18 million. Last year Dorling Kindersley made pre-tax profits of £17.4 million.

Earlier Alan Budd, chief economic adviser to the Treasury, told the Treasury Select Committee that sterling's recent rally would have a downward effect on retail prices, and that there was still some spare capacity in the economy which was putting downward pressure on inflation. His remarks suggest that the Treasury is not

inclined to raise base rates at next week's monetary meeting. Expectations of another imminent rate rise has been one reason behind the pound's surge. For his part, Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said he was not surprised by the pound's precipitous drop yesterday.

The pound also dropped against the dollar, closing at about \$1.6450 compared with Monday's finish at \$1.6830. The currency jumped to its highest level for nearly two years against continental European currencies as officials in the US and Germany said the euro may prompt a shift into dollars from marks.

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	4061.5	(+23.0)
Yield	3.91%	
FTSE All share	1986.28	(+9.40)
Nikkei	20630.55	(+44.13)
New York		
Dow Jones	6539.97	(+18.27)*
S&P Composite	739.51	(+3.35)*
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	102 1/8%	(101 1/2%)
Yield	6.53%	(6.50%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-mth Interbank	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Life long gilt	113 1/2%	(112)
STERLING		
New York	1.6400*	(1.6802)
London		
\$	1.6520	(1.6847)
DM	2.5876	(2.5984)
FF	1.7460	(1.8177)
Sfr	2.2000	(2.2131)
Yen	167.88	(161.68)
£ Index	93.7	(94.5)
DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.5660*	(1.5558)
FF	5.2850*	(5.2735)
Sfr	1.3285*	(1.3215)
Yen	113.67*	(114.53)
£ Index	98.2	(97.8)
Tokyo close Yen 114.05		
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brut 15-day (Feb)	\$22.90	(\$23.05)
GOLD		
London close	\$387.85	(\$371.05)
* denotes midday trading price		

Over and out

Competition for the Army's £2 billion Bowman battlefield communications contract was effectively eliminated when consortiums led by Racal and IIT Defence of America, the only two bidders, agreed to join forces. Page 26

Splashing out

Wessex Water is planning to bounce back from disappointment over the blocked bid for South West Water by spending its £75 million cash pile. Page 30

Treasury in £257m utilities clearout

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL
CORRESPONDENT

THE Government yesterday sold its remaining shares in utility companies in a £257 million auction. The Government has now raised £125 billion from holdings in privatised businesses since last autumn.

The sales, including British Energy shares, were timed to catch the market on a high.

Organised by NM Rothschild, the sale marks a change of fortune for the Government in its dealings in British Energy, the nuclear generator. After a disappointing flotation in summer, British Energy shares plunged below the offer price. The Government later disclosed that it had retained 12 per cent because of a failure to find buyers for shares kept back in a price stabilisation exercise. At that time, the shares languished at 101 1/2p — below the 105p at flotation. Yesterday, 81 million British Energy shares were placed at 147 1/2p; the Government kept five million shares, 0.5 per cent of the company, to fund bonuses under the public offer.

The sale of the Treasury's utilities holdings, except for some BT shares and a substantial stake in Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, was timed to avoid price-sensitive times. The sale included 6.6 million National Grid shares and 18.7 million ScottishPower. Pennington, page 27

McDonnell Douglas link-up with Boeing threatens Airbus

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

BOEING and McDonnell Douglas, the American commercial aircraft manufacturers, have agreed to collaborate on Boeing Jet programmes in a deal that could pose a serious challenge to Airbus Industrie, Boeing's European rival.

The companies said that the first project that McDonnell Douglas would join is the development of two new versions of the 747 jumbo jet, but the co-operation between the two companies is likely to broaden, heralding the creation of a new and hugely powerful force in aircraft manufacturing. Boeing is the world's largest commercial aircraft manufacturer, while McDonnell Douglas is ranked third, behind Airbus.

The co-operation agreement most affects Airbus, the second largest manufacturer in the world, which is in intense

competition with Boeing for new aircraft orders. Airbus, in which British Aerospace is a significant shareholder, will now have to fight the combined resources of two giants, which is likely to cause disquiet in Europe.

The agreement between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas appears to be a compromise arrangement after the collapse of merger talks late last year amid concerns that a full combination of the two companies would run into antitrust problems.

The co-operation deal is badly needed by McDonnell Douglas which has suffered several blows to its business in the past few weeks. It lost the race to build the new Joint Strike Fighter aircraft for the US and Britain, while Boeing won the right to bid for the project. It also recently an-

nounced that it was abandoning plans to build a new commercial jet because it could not afford the massive development costs.

Boeing, meanwhile, has had a bumper year, with a surge in orders to 618 new aircraft worth \$46 billion — the highest level since the company started building commercial aircraft in 1955.

To cope with demand, Boeing has taken on 17,500 workers since last January but is still having trouble meeting demand. Using some of McDonnell Douglas's spare manufacturing capacity is one solution to Boeing's problems.

Ron Woodward, president of Boeing's commercial aircraft division, said: "We have a record number of orders for commercial jets and several ongoing development programmes." He added: "Mc-

Donnell Douglas has excellent design and production capability, both in people and facilities, that are not being fully utilised."

The two companies have collaborated on other projects, and Boeing said that initially the agreement is expected to take several hundred McDonnell Douglas employees to Seattle in January to begin assisting with engineering design and analysis on the new jumbo. The agreement should be finalised in January.

The companies were partly forced into a closer working arrangement because of the continuing consolidation in the US aerospace industry. Lockheed Martin is buying Loral, another defence manufacturer, for \$9.1 billion, while Northrop Grumman is buying Westinghouse's defence electronics arm for \$3 billion.

Two Dogs unleashes surprise buyer

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY
AND ALASTAIR MURRAY

TWO DOGS, the Australian alcopops company, unexpectedly sold out yesterday to Pernod Ricard, the French drinks group, for a sum believed to be around A\$20 million (£9.7m).

The sale of Two Dogs will make Duncan MacGillivray, founder and managing director, a multimillionaire. He created the drink three years ago when he decided to brew up his neighbour's orchard of unsaleable lemons to see what would happen. The success of Two Dogs sparked a raft of rival alcoholic lemonades. The name was dreamt up in



Two Dogs: pioneer alcopop

a drunken moment the night before the first keg was due to go on sale. A journalist friend suggested calling it after the obscene joke about the Red

Indian tradition of naming children.

The drink is now sold in 44 countries and last year clocked up worldwide sales of around A\$60 million.

The sale to Pernod Ricard means that Mr MacGillivray, who still owns 70 per cent of Two Dogs, has turned his initial A\$300,000 investment into A\$14 million.

The move comes days after the British Government increased the tax on alcoholic sodas by 40 per cent, and just weeks after Two Dogs signed a 15-year agreement with Buitoni to make and distribute the product in Australia and New Zealand.

In the UK, Two Dogs is distributed by Merrydown,

the elder company, which said that it did not expect its licensing agreement to be affected by the takeover.

Mr MacGillivray will stay as managing director and will also take up a position on the Pernod Ricard board. He said: "Pernod Ricard will give Two Dogs vast international experience and worldwide distribution capacity, plus the financial muscle that will enable the brand to realise its full potential."

Pernod Ricard owns one of Australia's biggest wine-makers, Orlando Wyndham, whose Jacob's Creek wine is the top-selling Australian wine in the UK.

Pennington, page 27

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□ Strong sterling threatens prices too □ Treasury sale nets fair profit □ Lawyers' closed shop under threat

Retailers claim their pound of flesh

BRITISH manufacturing industry may be going to the dogs because of the soaring pound, but hey, look on the bright side. At least the cost of consumer goods will fall in the shops, putting pressure on inflation, and so on interest rates. A merry Christmas to us all, and let the new year look after itself.

Such is the received wisdom but, as ever in economics, for each view there is another opposite one. Theoretically, the lower cost of imported goods should be passed on by retailers; there is a body of opinion, led by economists such as Richard Jeffrey at Charterhouse Tilney, that says the opposite is true.

Mr Jeffrey argues that a strong domestic economy pushes manufacturers' costs ahead, as higher wages and falling unemployment increase unit labour costs. This outweighs any advantage from lower prices for imported raw materials. These higher costs cannot be passed on by exporters because of the strong currency, so they can only be absorbed by pushing up prices to you and me. Take a trip to your local shopping centre, if you can manoeuvre past the queues of waiting motorists, and see if he is right. Sterling has appreciated by 10 per cent since the summer. And

by how much have shop prices fallen?

The last set of retail price inflation figures, for October, showed a 3.3 per cent underlying rate of increase. The Government's target for the last quarter, an unrealistic 2.5 per cent, has had to be raised to 3 per cent. For the first quarter of next year the Treasury expects a fall to 2.5 per cent. Not if retailers, keen to make up for four years of lean margins, can help it.

Now look at our exporters. Doring Kindersley yesterday became the first such to point to the high pound as the sole reason behind a profits warning, but others such as Redland last week have linked it to other factors, in that case poor demand in overseas markets.

Among the worst-performing sectors on the stock market in November were textiles, diversified industrials, building materials and chemicals, exactly those areas that can expect to suffer from a strong pound. The analysts may not yet have taken

this on board in their individual company forecasts, but the market has. Expect further sterling-related warnings, and profits downgradings.

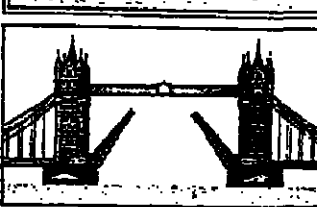
So let us be cheerful, and look at the worst case scenario. Exports are stalling, consumer spending is up, so prices are still rising. The result is pressure on base rates. Low exports hit the balance of payments, so the pound falls, an old-fashioned sterling crisis rather than the one we are enjoying at present. To defend sterling, up go base rates.

Time and Energy

ON the basis that when an insider sells, everyone should, the Treasury's disposal of most of its British Energy shares should persuade the half a million or so private investors still left to head for the exit.

Yesterday's sale coincided with the offloading of almost all of the contents of the Government's

PENNINGTON



lumber room of residual privatisation holdings, so perhaps nothing too sinister should be read into the timing.

The same exercise took place a year ago almost to the day, with the sale of residual holdings in BAA, BP and others. But while the Treasury has done very well out of British Energy this time, those 100,000-plus private shareholders convinced by the difficulties surrounding the sale to cut their losses and sell out early have much to be unhappy about.

Energy was supposedly the sell-off that went wrong, the shares plunging in early deal-

ings below the price that retail investors were asked to put up for the first time in any privatisation since BP in 1987. The part-paid were sold at 105p in July; once the private shareholder had filled in his or her cheque, the company announced that two of its reactors had to be shut down and the City's interest cooled.

Since early October, to the chagrin of those investors who sold, the price has rocketed. The company announced the departure of almost a third of the staff, cost savings that were not identified in the prospectus, as well as a link with one of the regional electricity companies. The rate of usage for its power stations has been higher than expectations, and the amount of energy generated is now running about 11 per cent ahead of last year, an advance that will be confirmed by November output figures due out today.

Cash generation has been equally far ahead of expectations, and Energy was able to cut debt in half in the six months to

September. The same old boring story, in other words: a public asset whose cost savings, trading performance and cashflow have streaked ahead of all forecasts since privatisation. But Energy's run of outperformance would seem to have come to an end.

Hambros takes on the house

ABOUT the only thing that is keeping house prices out of the stratosphere is the sheer hassle, at least south of Hadrian's Wall, of buying a house—those dreary months between putting in an offer and signing the contract taken up with correspondence at a snail's pace between matching sets of solicitors.

Hambros Countrywide believes it has found the answer: a one-stop shop selling mortgages, financial service products, and conveyancing in-house. That way Hambros gets the commission fees and speeds up the buying and selling process. It

will need experienced legal staff as well as more than £1 million of investment in technology, spending way beyond the purses of small partnerships of solicitors in provincial towns. The scheme starts next spring and will miss out on the housing upturn so far, but Hambros believes it could do for conveyancing what Direct Line did for motor insurance.

Just one concern. Anyone who has tried to do their own conveyancing knows the delays that solicitors can find to put in the way of anyone outside their own charmed circle, just as estate agents tend to take against those selling their homes through the newspapers. Does Hambros have the clout to take on a closed shop that even Lady Thatcher balked at challenging?

Sleeping Dogs...

A WINE critic once wittily described a particularly sappy Australian Chardonnay as tasting "like viciously spiked grapefruit juice". Pernod Ricard, owner of Jacob's Creek, probably thinks it is sticking with what it knows in buying Two Dogs spiked lemonade. But who is going to tell the French that the bottom has now fallen out of the alcopops market?

Siebe ready to head out on the acquisition trail

By OLIVER AUGUST

SIEBE, the system controls maker, has improved profits 32 per cent and achieved record margins of 14.7 per cent.

The group will be looking for acquisition targets in the £50 million to £100 million range to complement its existing business strategy of dominating its specialist markets.

In the six months to September 30, pre-tax profits rose from £144 million to £190 million and turnover jumped 23 per cent to £1.5 billion.

Shareholders will receive an interim dividend of 4.9p, up from 4.44p. Earnings per share rose from 19.2p to 24p.

Barrie Stephens, the chairman, said: "That we performed so well is due to the

even spread of our business operations, both by geographic region and economic cycle, and the market share gains which have been made possible by the technical leadership which we enjoy with many of our product lines."

The strong first-half performance was a good indication of the outcome for the year as a whole. Trading in America remained positive, while the Middle East and Far East continued to be robust, Mr Stephens said. There were also signs that markets in continental Europe were picking up.

Siebe designs and manufactures temperature and appliance controls, electronic

power controls, process automation and building control systems as well as engineered industrial equipment.

Unitech, the latest acquisition, should enhance earnings this year rather than dilute them as had been expected. Margins were increased at Unitech in spite of a downturn in the semiconductor sector.

Allen Yurko, the chief executive, said that Unitech had fought off hard competition to achieve a record year. "Responding quickly to this adverse economic environment, Unitech's costs were reduced, productivity increased and production facilities in Mexico and China were further developed. Investment in product

development, particularly in Asia, was also accelerated and marketing operations in Taiwan and throughout the Far East were expanded."

He said that Siebe was hoping to spend up to £100 million on further acquisitions. "But we are certainly not looking for anything bigger than that."

The group's financial position will allow acquisition activity in the future. Gearing currently stands at 52 per cent. Mr Yurko said: "We have an A-plus credit rating and we worked hard to get it. We won't just throw it away again now."

Tempos, page 28

Agent to do house-deals legal work

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

HAMBRO Countrywide, the UK's largest estate agency, is to offer a conveyancing service to customers to reduce the number of house sales that fall through because of legal delays (See Pennington, this page).

The initiative will cost £1.25 million, but Harry Hill, managing director, said he hoped to make £10 million extra profit from the venture within three years.

Five service centres around the country will each be staffed by 60 solicitors. From next spring, they will be open seven days a week to serve Hambro Countrywide's network of 727 residential estate agency offices.

Kenwood sticks to solo stance

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

KENWOOD, the household appliances manufacturer under pressure from rebel shareholders, insisted yesterday that it should remain independent, in spite of sharply lower half-time profits.

Tim Beech, managing director, said: "We feel we can produce shareholder value. The distraction of a merger is not something we want." He confirmed that Kenwood had received an informal approach from Pifco, the smaller but higher-rated appliances company but saw no strong commercial logic to a deal.

UK Active Value, the fund run by Julian Treger and Brian Myerson, which specialises in shaking up underperforming companies, is pressing Kenwood's board

to seek a sale. Mr Beech said Kenwood will shortly write to shareholders, urging them to oppose UK Active's motion at the extraordinary meeting.

Mr Treger said yesterday: "While Kenwood remains a company with enormous potential, these are weak results from a weak management team which remains essentially unchanged."

The company reported interim pre-tax profits down from £7.4 million to £3.3 million. The fall was mainly because of poor trading in France and Italy, which account for one third of Kenwood's business. The interim dividend, payable on February 24, stays at 3.25p.

Tempos, page 28

Pentland disposes of Woods

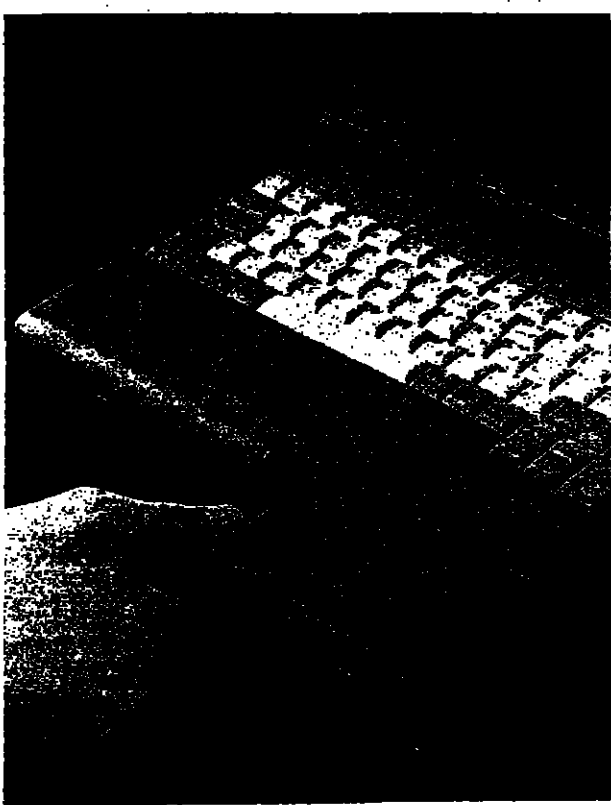
By CLARE STEWART

PENTLAND GROUP, the makers of sports and leisurewear brands, will be hit by a £21 million exceptional charge this year after the disposal of Woods Industries, its US subsidiary.

Woods, maker and distributor of electrical products, is being sold to Katy Industries for £27 million. Pentland will use the proceeds to repay part of Woods's debts of £48 million, mostly owed to Pentland itself.

Excluding exceptional costs, analysts expect profits of £32 million (£38.2 million) for the year to December.

SIEMENS
NIXDORF



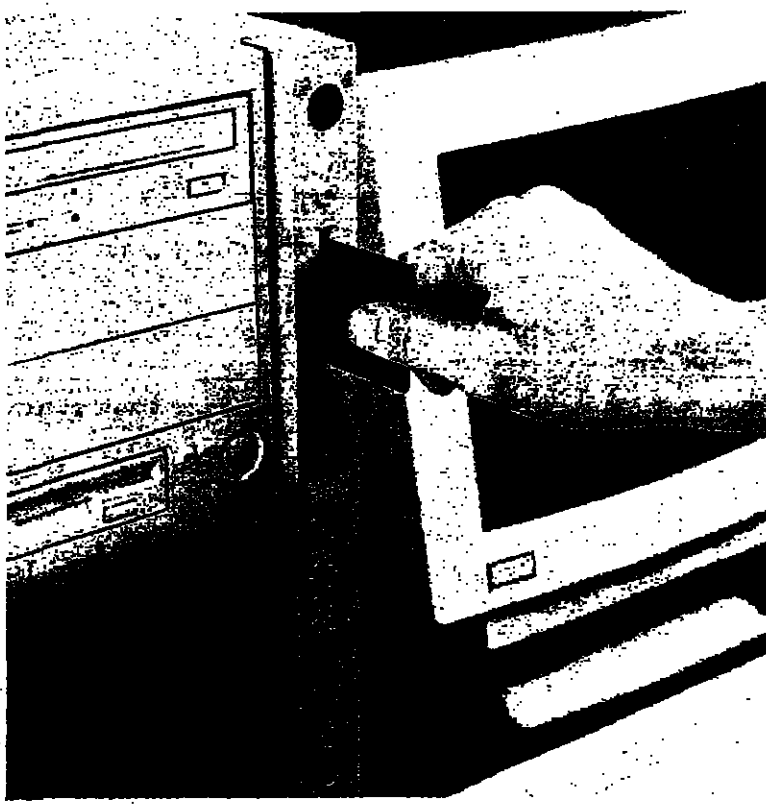
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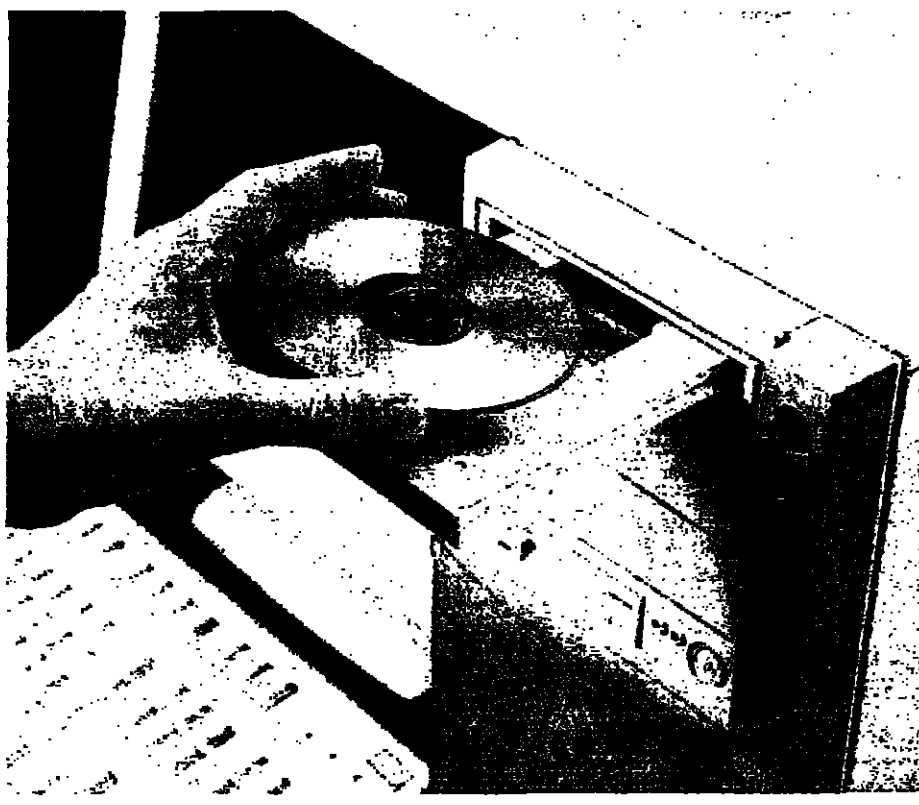
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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Tail-end sale of utilities fails to excite investors

THERE was evidence to suggest last night that the £257 million sale of the Government's remaining stake in a clutch of utilities had not gone entirely according to plan.

Partly paid shares in British Energy were unmoved at 147½p after HSBC James Capel, the broker, bought 11 million shares from the Government. HSBC later placed them with various institutions at the ruling market price of 147½p.

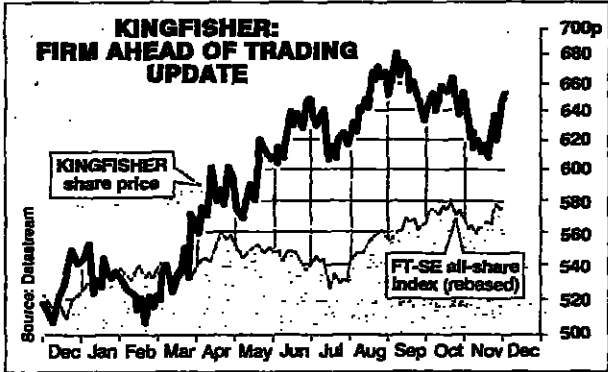
But by the close of business last night only 103.1 million shares had been registered on the City ticker. Allowing for the usual process of double counting, a total of 162 million shares should have been registered. This suggests that just over half the holding had been placed by the close of business.

British Energy was floated off in July this year at 100p and made slow progress during the first few months of trading. By October 14 they had reached 110p, providing the institutions that had subscribed for the issue with a small premium. In the past month, however, they have significantly outperformed the rest of the market.

The Treasury also unloaded 6.6 million shares in National Grid, unchanged at 190p, 1.96 million Northern Ireland Electricity, 2½p better at 364½p, 7.65 million Scottish Hydro, ½p dearer at 31½p, 18.7 million ScottishPower, ½p harder at 341½, 298.73 National Power, unmoved at 449p, 232.02 PowerGen ½p easier at 577p, 3.57 million Severn Trent, 8p dearer at 668½p, 111.800 South West Water, 1½p better at 598½p, and one million Wessex Water, ½p lower at 352½p.

The overnight rally on Wall Street was a surprise for an opening mark-up in London, where prices were chased sharply higher in thin trading. The FT-SE 100 index edged up to reach 4,066.7 but failed to consolidate its position as Wall Street saw an opening 32-point lead wiped out. The index eventually closed off its best with a rise of 23.0 at 4,061.5, partly reflecting a late sell-off in both gifts and sterling. The sell-off of utilities by the Government expanded total turnover to 847 million shares.

Kingsfisher was a firm market, adding 5p at 652½p ahead of today's trading update which is expected to paint an upbeat picture of prospects.



Source: Datastream

Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

FT-SE All-Share Index (Index)

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FT-SE All-Share Index (Index)

There was still no sign of Pifco's much talked of bid for Kenwood, which left the latter nursing a 10p fall at 223½p. Kenwood said no formal offer had been received from Pifco, which includes Russell Hobbs kettles. Kenwood has failed to live up to City expectations and trades well below its peak of 278p of last year. Pifco was unmoved at 283p.

The strong pound is taking its toll on Döring Kindersley, the publisher, leading brokers to begin downgrading their full-year profit forecasts. The group says that if the exchange rate of £1.69 is maintained for the rest of the year, it will wipe £1.6 million from profits. The shares fell 8p to 437p.

An upbeat statement about current trading offset the expected downturn in interim profits at Hazlewood Foods. The crisis over BSE reversed a profit of £2.7 million at its delicatessen and meat products division into a loss. The shares rose 5½p to 103p.

Siebel responded to better than expected first-half figures with a rise of 10p to 950p. The company, under Barrie Stephens, chairman, was in an upbeat mood about prospects at its meeting with analysts afterwards.

Young Holdings rallied first thing on further reflection of the proposed acquisition of Madison and a share placing. But the price boiled over and finished 1½p easier at 123½p.

A profits warning led Cydyport 19p down at 133½p by the close.

GILF-EDGED: The late self-off in sterling saw early gains wiped out and left bond prices nursing small losses on the day ahead of today's auction. The worst of the losses were seen at the shorter end, which is more sensitive to movements in interest rates.

In futures the December series of the long gilt touched a high for the day of £112.73 before finishing a tick easier at £111.92. The total number of contracts completed reached 56,000. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was left unchanged at £105.52, while Treasury 8 per cent 2030 was down a tick at £103.2.

NEW YORK: The bulls looked in on Wall Street, where shares were widely higher by mid-session. The Dow Jones industrial average stood at 6,539.9, up 18.27 points, at midday.

MAJOR MARKETS

New York (midday):

Dow Jones 6,539.97 (+18.27)

S&P Composite 794.81 (+3.35)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average 20,630.56 (+4.13)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng 13,486.26 (+61.3)

Amsterdam:

EOE Index 636.37 (+0.12)

Sydney:

ASX 2,280.1 (+5.0)

Frankfurt:

DAX 2,886.96 (+2.38)

Singapore:

SEAC 2,185.72 (+7.46)

Brussels:

General 1,051.92 (+0.03)

Paris:

CAC-40 3,249.11 (+30.48)

Zurich:

SIX 829.20 (+8.88)

London:

FT 30 2,810.7 (-4.6)

FT 100 4,061.5 (+23.0)

FTSE 100 4,061.5 (+23.0)

FTSE 250 2,015.4 (+10.2)

FTSE Euro Stoxx 100 1,899.49 (+21.04)

FT All-Share 1,988.20 (+0.40)

FT Non Financials 1,177.30 (+0.32)

FT Financials 1,810.90 (+0.15)

Bargains 3,957

S&P Volume 1,947.3m

USM (Dunsmuir) 193.43 (+0.01)

USM 1,652.0 (-0.03)

German Mark 2,588.4 (-0.01)

Exchange Index 93.1 (+0.8)

Bank of England official doc (4pm)

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Essential repairs

LUCASVARITY has added extra wax to its restructuring and yesterday, after a good run with a charcoal leather, the package of cost-savings worth £120 million emerged with a fine surface sheen. Underneath the exterior gloss, however, the outlook is not quite so attractive. Back in May when the merger was announced, Lucas and Varity reckoned a combination of their businesses could bring about savings of £60 million, a figure that was clearly conservative given the constraints of the bid process.

To double that figure in the space of six months and add £130 million of asset write-downs suggests a belt and braces approach that would not be required if the outlook was more favourable. The main problem is the weak Continental market where the company needs to knit together its braking systems businesses.

The merger effectively eliminates the only rival bidder, thereby ensuring success. But Rascal pays a price: recruiting ITT dilutes Rascal's share of the project. A push to secure long-term service contracts should help to smooth the income stream, but although recurring revenues are rising, they still account for less than a third of its income; the target of 50 per cent still looks remote. Investors with a better sense of timing than Rascal's management have hitherto made money out of this stock. But in future gains may prove more elusive. And in due course, Rascal itself may decide the best course of action is to merge with another defence group.

Rascal will never again count its chickens. In the summer, the defence electronics group confidently predicted higher profits and the shares, which had been on the wane, reversed course. A subsequent examination of the order book revealed gaping holes. The shares reversed course again, wiping £150 million from Rascal's market value. Excessive optimism is the least of Rascal's problems. It competes in a world of shrinking military budgets, and the contract-driven nature of the business ensures a lumpy income stream. Rascal has taken steps to reduce uncertainty. It has joined forces with ITT, its American rival, to bid for a £2 billion contract to supply digital battlefield communications systems to the British Army.

WHAT IS Siebel's secret? The system controls group is one of Britain's strongest industrial performers and reported a 32 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits yesterday. Unsurprisingly for a system controls manufacturer, Siebel's managers have a system that works well for them. They call it the "magic six". Division heads are required to report six key business indicators, including orders, purchases and cash flows every week. The board uses the information as an early warning system.

But there is more to Siebel's success than micro-level managing. The group is quick to adjust to changes in the business climate. In the 1980s, Siebel was thought to be part of the ram-raiding brigade, keeping up with the Hansons of this world in the merger and acquisition frenzy. Yet, while Hansons stagnated, Siebel has gone from strength to strength.

Kenwood's management had good reason to look glum yesterday. The interim results were poor and the outlook not much better. All in all, they produced nothing that would keep at bay their disident shareholders. UK Active Value, which wants to sell the company, further evidence that the company is much more than an investment trust of engineering businesses. Unlike Hanson, Siebel's bosses are more than corporate financiers controlling the purse strings but have their eye on the tiller, the radar screen and the engine room as well as the petty cash box. In the supposedly quieter 1990s, the management has been putting greater emphasis on long-term planning and staff training. Siebel is, however, still in the acquisition business and, ultimately, will need new capacity to keep profits growing apace.

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THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

Holding the purse strings

ANGELA KNIGHT dived straight for her handbag on hearing yesterday's fire alarm at the Treasury. Shielded from the rain by her natty headscarf and a borrowed brody, but still in her high heels and jade suit, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury marched her minions into the basement coffee bar of the Methodist Central Hall.

Not to be put off from the day's work, Knight resumed a meeting on building societies. As the only one with a handbag, however, her leadership qualities were tested to the full, when it came to a round of coffees.

Sweet millions

WE ALWAYS knew that the Bank of Credit and Commerce International was in a mess. But, until yesterday, we didn't know just how bad.

John Moscow, New York's deputy chief of investigations, who spent years examining BCCI, split the beans at the International Fraud Convention in London. "It was a beauty and a joy to behold," he said, describing how it felt to find a note for a \$100 million loan with "as per your request" scribbled down. "No details, no names, nothing," Moscow tells me. "Nice, sweet and fraudulent."

Call screen

ON THE golf course or at the gym, single-minded City bosses will never be far from their mobile phones with the launch of "Mobile Money". The first international service to provide all listed London Stock Exchange share prices and foreign exchange rates direct to your mobile phone comes courtesy of Martin Dawes Telecommunications.



"I still think we should have issued a 'profits warning' warning"

"A TURKEY'S for life, a chicken's for Christmas" is the festive slogan from Nando's. The flame-grilled chicken restaurant is cashing in on a campaign this Christmas to save the turkeys. As well as car bumper stickers, supporters receive a loyalty card, with an in-store tracking device to record the number of turkeys that help to save.

Thriller CV

NEVER mind John McLaren's new book, get your hands on a copy of his curriculum vitae. According to the document, the director of corporate finance at Morgan Grenfell and author of silicon thriller *Press Send*, "lives in a stunning house in central London, once occupied by composer Vaughan Williams. Owns possibly the UK's most impressive stereo. Drives a Nissan Skyline and E-type Jag".

And if this isn't enough, I also read that the 45-year-old smoothie was the youngest director to be taken on at Barings when he joined the bank in 1984, and was recently included on the *Evening Standard* list of who to be seen with, "drives too fast and eats out too often". He is also the self-proclaimed James Bond of merchant banking.

MORAG PRESTON



Sir Alick Rankin, chairman, is well versed in the ways of the City



Sir Gerald Elliot, former chairman, is critical of short-term plays

Grandees do battle for the soul of Christian Salvesen

Payout and demerger plans highlight a clash of style, writes Magnus Linklater

A bid to unseat the entire board of Christian Salvesen, the transportation and business services group based in Edinburgh, is building into a fascinating confrontation between two of the leading names in Scottish business — Sir Gerald Elliot, Salvesen's former chairman, and Sir Alick Rankin, who now holds the post. The war of words between the two is remarkable, not just for its outspokenness, but for the fact that it is taking place so publicly in a city where financial altercations are normally conducted discreetly behind neo-classical doors.

Today the two men will meet for the first time since the row blew up, when Sir Gerald, who retired as chairman eight years ago, and other key shareholders members of the Salvesen family, hold talks with the board to hear details of its plans. There is little sign of a meeting of minds.

It is a clash, not just of opinion, but of style. Sir Gerald, 72, is an ascetic figure, devoted about the arts as well as business, a lover of classical music who plays the violin, and who has written extensively on arts administration and economic management. He believes that companies should build on their strengths and look to long-term growth rather than pander to the whims of the market. And he objects strongly to what he calls the "bizarre blackmail" by which Salvesen is being forced to demerge its most profitable company and pay out £150 million in special dividends to satisfy its shareholders. "I question whether the board is fit to carry on" is his battle cry, and since he still owns 2 per cent of the company to which he has devoted his entire working career, his is a voice that has to be listened to.

No one, by contrast, would accuse Sir Alick of asceticism. The extrovert chairman of Scottish & Newcastle Breweries, aged 61, is more likely to be found at Muirfield Golf Club than the Usher Hall. He lists his recreations as shooting, fishing, golf, tennis, and the study of oenology, which is wine. He knows the City inside out, and has helped to build S&N into the UK's biggest brewer through a shrewd programme of diversification and acquisitions. Its half-year results, announced on Monday, pushed its share price up 1p to 650p on what was otherwise an indifferent day, a performance which Sir Alick noted with some satisfaction from the comfort of his office next door to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, with its spectacular view of Arthur's Seat. He dismisses Sir Gerald's intervention as a failure to understand how shareholders behave, and accuses him of destabilising the very company he did so much to mould. At the heart of the argument is a classic debate about short-term City interests and long-term growth.

Sir Gerald is convinced that a sturdy independent Scottish company is being placed at risk to satisfy greedy shareholders. Sir Alick insists that if the demerger move had not been made, "the consequence would have been no Salvesen at all". But the confrontation has layers of irony as well.

Sir Alick was once an Elliot protégé, invited on to the Salvesen board in 1986 when Sir Gerald was still chairman, with a view to strengthening its Scottish base. He has himself been vigorous in his defence of Scottish institutions, most notably when he defended S&N against a hostile takeover by Elders IXL, the Australian lager group, in a highly public campaign where he played the Scottish card rather than the way Sir Gerald is now doing. And it was his action this summer in turning down a takeover bid for Salvesen from Hays, the service group, which sparked the whole row.

The rejection of the £1.1 billion indicative bid from Hays followed a spate of rumours, leaked to the press, about the nature of the offer. It led to a volatile Salvesen share price, pushing it above 400p. This greatly heightened the expectations of shareholders. When, therefore, the board turned it down as inadequate, there was widespread condemnation from powerful institutions such as Scottish Widows and Standard Life.

In order to rebuild support, Chris Masters, Salvesen's chief executive, last week proposed a demerger of its successful Aggreko subsidiary, which hires out industrial equipment, and is now so successful that it accounts for more than 40 per cent of Salvesen's profits. In addition, he announced that early next year a £150 million special dividend would be paid to shareholders.

But to Salvesen's concern, instead of restoring confidence, the share price continued to drift. Some commentators accused the company of simply reshuffling the pack. "Demerger on its own does not address any operating issues," said Graham Wood, of Standard Life.

Sir Gerald was particularly scornful. "The whole exercise was meant not to promote the long-term interests of the company, but to tweak up the share price," he says. "But this hasn't happened. The share price has not gone up, it's gone down. And the press comments have been miserable: Salvesen throws in the towel, Salvesen puts up the white flag, that kind of thing. But this is not a bankrupt company, it's a strong, profitable forward-thrusting company." He has decided to fight the proposals publicly, to take on the board, and to



Masters: proposed demerger

demand its resignation if necessary. Sir Alick responds impatiently: "Gerald is a nice chap, but not only is he not up to date with the way the City works, he is deeply resentful of it. There is all the difference in the world between knowing what it is like being a public company and not knowing. You have to work within the system, you can't just pick the bits you like. If we hadn't taken action, the share price might have gone into freefall, and certainly well below £3, and we would have been the non-flavour of every month in the City. Salvesen would have been vulnerable to every predator in the business."

He accuses Sir Gerald of destabilising the company and being personally responsible for undermining the share price. "All he's doing is creating a degree of uncertainty in the mind of the shareholder," he said. He is angry too at the suggestion that the board is divided. "There is not a single member who is not rock solid."

Sir Gerald disagrees: "The board is not monolithic on this. I've talked to a lot of people in the City and they say what's happened is quite wrong. A board is meant to promote and enhance a company. No board which solemnly pays out half its net asset value to reward its shareholders can claim to be doing that." He estimates that to achieve the dividend payout, Salvesen will have to increase its borrowings substantially, bringing them a devaluation of about 150 per cent which he considers "dangerously high".

Not so, says Sir Alick: it is only 110 per cent, which is perfectly acceptable. "Sir Gerald has got to consider whether he is criticising the board, or using this whole issue as a soap box from which to attack the City. We are continuing to run this company in the best possible way in the interests of its shareholders. If we had not done so there would simply have been no company at all."

With the views of both men so polarised, it is unlikely that today's meeting will be a particularly cosy one. But despite the war of words, each had warm things to say about the other, "splendid chap... high regard" and so on. And both used the same phrase to describe this battle of the grandees. "Great fun, don't you think?"

Jon Ashworth on the factors driving accountants' soul-baring

Numbers man has secret widget itch

Nick Land's deep, dark, dirty secret is out. Not only does his office command spectacular views of Waterloo station, but his pay cheque, as senior partner in Ernst & Young, will more than cover the household bills. Land took home a shade under £427,000 in the year to end-June, making Colin Sharman's £740,000 package at KPMG look positively vulgar. But not bad going, all the same.

Ten years ago, all this baring of souls would have been unthinkable. The Big Eight accountants found the idea of advertising frightening enough. The thought of exposing their books to scrutiny would have been too much. But forward-thinkers like Sharman and Land saw things differently. Business was going to grow increasingly tough for accountants, and a greater openness was called for if they were to hold their own. There could be no more hiding behind the partnership veil.

Land, 48, is as well-equipped as anyone to peel back the layers. Disarmingly jovial, readily contentious, he has presided over a period of intense change at the firm, and is keen to drive the process forward. Publishing the accounts is a logical step, even if more for the benefit of the media than for the firm's clients. "I think the clients are pleased we're doing it, but it's not at the top of their list." Land has worked hard at breaking down barriers in the seven years since Ernst & Whinney merged with Arthur Young. Melding the two cultures was neither pleasant nor easy. As Land recalls: "We



Nick Land, senior partner of Ernst & Young: "The odd widget would have been nice."

spent the first couple of years just smashing the two businesses together, sorting the basics out, mixing people up, trying to get economies and that sort of thing, and we did it in a pretty forthright way." The headcount came down from 8,000 to 6,500. By July 1995, when Land succeeded Elwyn Eilledge as senior partner, the emphasis was shifting forward. "We began to make financial information much more freely available, began to talk much more openly about the numbers." The decision to publish the accounts was taken about 14 months ago. "It's a natural progression. Arguably we

should have done it sooner." Ernst & Young's accounts give the clearest insight yet into the pressure that partners are under. It shows earnings struck at an average of £172,000 a year between 1993 and 1995, rising to £200,000 last year. Land blames the recession, and says there has been heavy investment in people and methodology.

But firms are under fire on a broader front. The fear of "deep-pocket" law suits against auditors has alarmed partners: one of the reasons why Ernst & Young, like Price Waterhouse, is looking to the safety of limited liability partnerships. Competition is intense, both from corporate finance boutiques and law firms specialising in tax, and from consultants like McKinsey and Bain & Co.

competitive, but what you want to do is engender an environment where people feel that it is in their career interests to stay on longer than they might."

This was certainly true of Land. Raised in Shoreham-on-Sea, between Worthing and Brighton, he came to London in 1970 for what was meant to be the "classic" two-year stint. Making partner in 1978, he went on to run the London office of Ernst & Whinney, taking on managerial responsibilities, then becoming UK managing partner in 1992 before the top job beckoned.

He is wife, Sonia Land, enjoys an equally high profile. A former chief executive of HarperCollins, she runs Shell Land, a literary agency, and is a non-executive director of Waterford Wedgwood and Mirror Group Newspapers. The couple live in Chiswick, west London, with their son, Christopher, 12. Weekends are spent near Haslemere in Surrey.

Whatever the pressures, Land still thinks making partner is a worthwhile goal. "You're not going to become a multi-millionaire, but you should get a pretty good standard of living." Things could have been very different, if I'm really honest about it. I could definitely have been running some miserable factory somewhere.

That the "factory" is Ernst & Young is no bad thing. "What I like most is being involved with running a business. I don't think it matters too much, to be honest, what sort of business it is. But the odd widget would have been nice."



ANTHONY HARRIS

The odd tale of Alice in Euroland

Imagine, if you can, a horse race run under the following rules:

□ The form of all runners will be assessed in a series of trials, long enough to ensure consistency. They will then be handicapped accordingly, in terms of starting position.

□ During these trials, runners may carry any weight they wish, provided that this does not lead to in-and-out running. Inconsistency in test running will lead to disqualification.

□ Once under starter's orders, or indeed later in the race, runners are free to shed any excess weight they were carrying during the trials.

Now answer the following questions (using one side of a postage stamp only):

a) What to you think of these rules? b) Which horse would you back?

To save you any thought, the answers are, in reverse order: the winner would be the horse with most weight to shed, because the rules are as silly as anything since Lewis Carroll's *Caucus Race*. Now explain, if you think you can, how the negotiators at Maastricht came to adopt a set of rules for the euro which embody exactly the same Alice in Wonderland logic. Take your time; write at book length if necessary. You will still be unconvincing.

The point of this rather contrived analogy is to persuade you, before I utter the deadly words, to think seriously about what Eurocrats might call *structural convergence*. "Might", because here we have a puzzle within a puzzle: have they actually thought about this matter at all, or is it an accident waiting to happen? Are they, in short, being deeply Machiavellian, or just plain stupid? And is it too late to persuade any to notice?

Time to translate. The sheddable weights which the continental economies — especially the so-called core economies — are carrying are their extravagant social provisions, the pension and welfare obligations that can add more than 40 per cent to actually payroll costs. These are so burdensome that they have already driven some French enterprises to move their whole operations, together with their French staff, to Kent. Their Govern-

ment knows that these are a severe handicap, which is why they worry about the euro/US dollar exchange, and accuse EU partners with more reasonable rules of "social dumping".

German companies vote with their feet, and build plants in Poland or the Czech Republic, but their Government, still in the grip of its Atlas delusion, appears unworried. Nothing, it seems to imagine, need change. But this does not mean that nothing will change. On the contrary, it is a near certainty that as costs are inflated in future through the ageing of the population, they will have to change. Can you imagine, for example, that the French trucking industry will be able to honour its promise of 75 per cent pensions from 55 if life expectancy goes on rising? In due course continental governments will grasp the same nettle that Margaret Thatcher grubbed up years ago, when she abolished Serps. It is a racing certainty.

Now of course they may not get away with it as easily as she did. If their streets are endlessly blockaded, the French might find it a struggle simply to cut back social on-costs fast enough to preserve some hope of competing. In that case, they will never gain an edge. But it is at least as likely, surely, that at some stage the social overhead will be seen as an EU crisis, and tackled on a harmonised basis; and in that outcome, the first shall be last. That is not a forecast, mark your word; but even if the odds are against a resolute EU solution, the mere possibility shows what a headache it is for a country with low social overhead to fix "irrevocably" its terms of internal EU competition, at this early stage.

Think about that, and you may also begin to wonder why the French, who already talk of their internal exchange rate, which could at any stage be devalued in real terms by a French Thatcher, as irrevocable, but make such a fuss about the rate against the US dollar, which is not fixed at all. Stupid? When France appears stupid, put your money on Machiavelli.

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Wessex views future after veto on bid

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

WESSEX WATER is planning to bounce back from its blocked bid for South West Water by spending its £75 million cash pile to offer more value to its shareholders.

Although analysts hope for a buyback or a special dividend, the company has not ruled out fresh attempts at acquisitions. Industry watchers think that Wessex could go for Bristol Water, the small statutory water supplier.

Nick Hood, Wessex Water chairman, declared the Government's veto of its planned bid for South West as "barmy". He said: "It's OK for the Cincinnati Cookie Company which knows nothing about water to come over and buy a water business but not for us." Wessex spent £3 million on preparations for a bid and on responding to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry that ensued. The bid was barred by the Government because it would reduce the number of water companies

with which the industry regulator can make comparisons. This has left Wessex with £75 million of cash. Mr Hood said that this would be used to produce value to shareholders within the next six months.

A move for Bristol Water would not arouse the same monopoly concerns. Wessex could also increase its holding in UK Waste Management, its joint venture with Waste Management International of the US. WMI is willing to consider various sales as part of a sweeping review.

A shake-up is under way in Wessex Water, with the immediate loss of up to 30 senior jobs. In the six months to September 30, Wessex cut operating costs by 4 per cent. It plans similar cuts in the future.

The company lifted pre-tax profits for the half year by 10.4 per cent, to £75.5 million. UK Waste Management contributed £6.2 million to profits.

The interim dividend, due on April 7, is 5.7p, up 14 per cent.



Colin Skellett, left, Wessex Water chief executive, and Nick Hood, chairman, yesterday

Hazlewood spices up its forecast

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE PROSPECT of an improved final dividend gave a boost to shares in Hazlewood Foods yesterday, despite a 30 per cent drop in half-time profits.

The company said the BSE scare knocked £2 million off profits at the delicatessen and meat division

and £500,000 off profits at the ready meals division. The results include an exceptional charge of £4.7 million on the disposal of Charles Turner, the recycled paper products business. Pre-tax profit was £11.4 million compared with £16.1 million a year ago. Peter Barr, chairman, said

stronger margins and strong cash generation mean he is confident about the second half and expects to be able to propose a higher final dividend. The interim dividend was maintained at 2.4p. It is payable on January 21. The shares closed 5½p higher at 103p.

Marston's to expand piano bars

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

MARSTON Thompson & Evershed, the regional brewer, said yesterday that it hoped to open 11 new Pinner and Piano bars next year.

David Gordon, managing director, said that Marston's would aim to increase the opening rate to 15 a year for the subsequent two years. Marston's purchased the Pinner and Piano chain for £20 million in May.

Mr Gordon's comments came as Marston's unveiled a 5 per cent increase in half-year profits before tax to £14.7 million. Turnover rose 7 per cent, to £91.4 million.

The operating margin edged ahead from 18.1 per cent to 18.3 per cent. Overall beer volumes fell 2.1 per cent, although profits from brewing increased by 8 per cent. Sales of own-brew products edged ahead by 0.5 per cent, with Marston's Bitter Smooth-brewed, the company's new nitro-keg beer, performing ahead of expectations. Mr Gordon added that the company's launch in the United States was progressing well.

The interim dividend was increased by 8 per cent, to 2.7p, payable on January 14.

New NatWest unit for Gartmore funds

NATWEST has established a new marketing company since its acquisition of Gartmore, investment managers, in April. The NatWest and Gartmore Marketing Group will centralise the sale of investment products, through the bank's branches, sales force and Gartmore's network amongst independent financial advisers. Both the NatWest and Gartmore brands will be retained. The move will enable NatWest's 6.5 million customers to buy a core range of around six unit trusts on an execution-only basis, although the bank will still provide financial advice. The Gartmore brand will be used to market specialist funds. Lawrence Churchill, managing director of NatWest Life & Investment Services, said further synergies in the retail business were possible, particularly between NatWest UK, Coutts and the Oliver & Bonacini Bank. Certain NatWest and Gartmore unit trusts may be merged. Up to 80 people lost their jobs when Gartmore replaced NatWest Investment Management as the bank's fund manager.

Camden Motors buyout

CAMDEN MOTORS, the car dealer owned by Barclays Bank for 20 years, has been sold to its management for an undisclosed sum. The company, which Barclays inherited when it bought Mercantile Credit in 1975, is the fifteenth largest car dealer in the UK, with 450 staff. Candover Investments is backing the buyout. It will be chaired by Sir Geoffrey Whalen, the former chairman of Peugeot UK. Barclays will remain its largest customer.

Lorien buys rivals

LORIEN, the AIM-listed, fast growing computer support services company, is buying two competitors for £14.5 million. It is paying up to £10.5 million for Frost Berkeley Associates, business software consultancy to the City of London, and £4 million for Arena Resources. Lorien is funding the buys through a placing and open offer to raise £18.25 million, offering new shares at 320p on a one-for-four basis.

St James starts well

ST JAMES BEACH HOTELS, the operator of hotels in Barbados, earned pre-tax profits of £250,000 in the six months to September 30, against losses of £203,000 previously. Earnings were 0.51p a share (losses of 1.28p) and the interim dividend is lifted to 1.75p (1.5p). This is the first time the company, whose earnings are much higher in the second half, has achieved a profit in the first half. This was attributed to higher room rates and improved occupancy.

Barcom boosts payout

BARCOM, the specialist plant hire and sales group, is increasing the total dividend to 1.2p a share from 0.3p after reporting a rise in pre-tax profits to £2.7 million in the year to September 30 from £700,000 previously. Earnings improved to 5.1p a share (2.6p). There is a final dividend of 0.8p. Turnover was £52.5 million (£24.2 million). The company said the construction and housing markets were unlikely to see a significant increase in the current year.

Morrison's first interim

MORRISON CONSTRUCTION GROUP, the construction company listed in October 1995, lifted pre-tax profits to £4.77 million from £3.18 million in the six months to September 30. Earnings were 4.69p a share (4.28p) and there is a maiden interim dividend of 1.64p a share. The shares fell 1p to 236½p. Turnover rose to £123 million from £98 million. The company said it had made strong progress on Private Finance Initiative projects.

Berisford stock offer

BERISFORD, the food equipment to Magnet kitchens group, set a maximum price of 73p a unit for the purchase of its convertible unsecured loan stock. The buy-back was delayed last month after the company announced a possible bid approach. On Friday Berisford said the bidder had withdrawn. The offer represents a 10 per cent premium over Monday's price for the 5 per cent convertible unsecured loan stock 2015.

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£20,000-£49,999	3.00%	3.03%
£5,000-£19,999	2.50%	2.52%
Three Month Reserve Account* (Also available to Business Clients)		
£50,000+	5.25%	5.35%
£25,000-£49,999	4.25%	4.31%
£10,000-£24,999	4.00%	4.06%
7 Day Notice Deposit Account†	1.00%	1.00%
TESSA*	6.375%	6.52%
Charity TESSA*	5.75%	5.875%

*Interest is paid quarterly †Interest is paid half-yearly

- Interest is payable on account balances below the minimum level at a gross rate of 1% p.a. (Gross C.A.R. 1%).
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1996							1995									
Low Company				Price			High Company				Price					
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES							ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES									
121	478	478	Alcoholic Beverages	478	10	63	134	478	478	478	478	478	478	478	478	478
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JAZZ 1

In praise of Ira: celebrating the other half of the famous Gershwin songwriting partnership



JAZZ 2

Hotfooting it from Canada: Diana Krall, the most promising vocal talent of the 1990s, heads for London

THE TIMES ARTS



JAZZ 3

From brash pop icon to brave jazz experimenter: Deborah Harry continues to reinvent herself



TOMORROW

Jodie Foster goes behind the camera to direct Anne Bancroft and Holly Hunter in *Home for the Holidays*

JAZZ: Salutes to an incomparable lyricist of yesteryear, and a star of tomorrow. Plus the return of an icon



George (left) and Ira Gershwin: a perfect writing partnership abruptly ended by George's death

Fascinating rhyme man takes a bow

Richard Morrison celebrates the genius of Ira Gershwin, born 100 years ago

For anybody who loves songs, Friday will be a great day and a sad day. Great because it marks the 100th anniversary of Ira Gershwin's birth. Sad because, as the centenaries of these supreme lyricists pass by — Cole Porter in 1991, Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein last year — we become increasingly aware of how inadequate the lyric-writing of our own era has become.

Where, in all those clodhopping mega-musicals that lurch into the West End, can you find a single line to match the wit of an Ira Gershwin lyric? Or a single rhyme to rival the audacity of the genius who twinned "unhumble you" with "silken-laceable you"? Who today would dare to pen an entire patter-chorus consisting of nothing but the surnames of 49 Russian composers? It's not that present-day lyricists are dimmer than Ira; more that they have such low expectations of their audience's comprehension.

If appreciation of his craft is not as widespread as it should be, that is probably because of brother George. The words "Gershwin song" imply just one, indivisible creator — and that illusion is sustained by the product itself. Words fit melody so well that the notion of them being separately conceived is scarcely credible.

Try to imagine Ira's words to *Fascinating Rhythm* set to any tune except George's: or George's tune fitted to other words. Impossible. Then read, in Ira's great textbook of songwriting, *Lyrics on Several Occasions*, how much sweat and guile went into achieving that seemingly heaven-sent synthesis:

"When I got to the eighth line I showed the lyric to George. His comment was that the fourth and eighth lines should have a double rhyme where I had rhymed them with single syllables. I protested... to me the last two notes in these

lines formed a spondee. But this George couldn't see, and so, on and off, we argued for days. Finally I had to capitulate and write the lines as they are today."

No other songwriting partnership was so intensely intertwined. But then, they were brothers. Together they had survived the lean years in the immigrant ghettos of the Lower East Side: 28 homes in 18 years. Together they revelled in giddy success — the extraordinary 1927-28 season, for instance, when four Gershwin shows ran simultaneously on Broadway.

And together they took their artform into areas that today's tunesmiths would not dream of entering: folk-opera with a conscience in *Porgy and Bess*; biting satire in *Strike Up the Band*; *Let 'em Eat Cake* and *Of Thee I Sing*. Those who know "the Gershwin shows" only from the frothy compilation, *Crazy For You*, are missing a lot.

Then, at 38, George was struck by a fatal brain tumour. "No one will ever know how much Ira suffered when George died," wrote Irving Berlin. Perhaps. But you get an inkling from the brittle lyrics that Ira wrote after George's death: songs with barely-coded titles like *Once There Were Two of Us* and *Something's Wrong*.

Yet the measure of Ira's enduring talent is that he pulled himself together and wrote the scintillating lyrics of *Lady in the Dark* — the show that gave his new partner, Kurt Weill, his first Broadway hit. What a shame that this scathing topical comedy is never staged

today. It's about a career-mad magazine editor who goes to a shrink to have her nightmares interpreted. In one hallucination, for instance, she interrupts her own wedding to scream "Where are the proofs?" at her guests. Such editors are not unknown, of course. But this one also harbours a subconscious carnal desire for her own advertising manager, which must be a unique mental disorder.

The point is that Ira could take for granted the fact that his audience was sophisticated enough to lap up a satire on psychiatry that was full of dazzling wordplay. Who would attempt to mount such an intellectual tour-de-force in the musical theatre today? Indeed, who — apart from Stoppard — would do so even in the spoken theatre?

At the heart of Ira's craft lay a duality. He aspired, he said, to catch "the way people speak to each other — their slang, their clichés, their catchphrases". And he succeeded. Such lines as "They can't take that away from me", or "Nice work if you can get it", or "How long has this been going on?" seem plucked straight from the subway.

Yet he matched this gift for the colloquial with flights of fantasy as wild as anything in W.S. Gilbert or his mentor P.G. Wodehouse. His lovers argue about whether it's *tomato* or *tomahio*. Or they defy the world's ridicule by making mad comparisons with Columbus, Marconi and Edison.

Ira loved to mix the archaic and the modish — as in the line "Of thee

I sing, baby". And he delighted in shuffling words simply to make nice sounds. *S Wonderful* is surely the most gleeful essay in sibilant saturation since Shakespeare's "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought".

As for his rhymes, well, he was capable of epic virtuosity when the mood suited:

At the risk of sounding platitudinous Here's what I believe should be the attitude in us.

The work of a showoff? I don't think so. Ira simply belonged to an era when songwriters aspired to be literate and brain-teasing, not mind-numbing and obvious. As a teenager, drifting through dime-a-day jobs, he devoured Ibsen, Barrie, Wodehouse. At least two of his lyrics paraphrase Herrick; he also cited the Roman poet Horace as an influence. He loved the English language, and was expert in its application. Indeed, one of the most passionate passages in *Lyrics for Several Occasions* is a long defence of his use of a single word — the "got" in *I got rhythm*.

"You are the greatest lyricist of them all," Wodehouse told Ira in 1959. The compliment was justified. True, an accident of birth gave Ira a brother who wrote the finest tunes of the era, and an accident of history brought them to prominence just as the Broadway musical itself reached its finest hour.

But Ira's craft was no accident. He consciously fused the Gilbertian tradition of English comic verse with the vigour of American speech, and produced a body of work — 700 lyrics in all — that stands comparison with anything in 20th-century "serious" poetry. They can't take that away from him, as the old song almost says.

● The Complete Lyrics of Ira Gershwin is published by Pavilion Books

Sensuous mistress of klutz

Trying to keep pace with Diana Krall's conversation is no easy task. Not that she talks excessively: on the contrary, her manner is unusually modest and self-effacing. It is the range of her interests that proves so distracting. In an instant she can switch subject from Fats Waller to Tori Amos and Peggy Lee, from the merits of Peter Gabriel and Oscar Peterson to childhood memories of the Swedish tenor Just Jörling.

If Krall appears hesitant about trumpeting her own talents, there is a growing circle of musicians and critics who are happy to do it on her behalf. On the strength of two major-label albums the Canadian singer-pianist — who makes her London debut next Tuesday — has emerged as the most promising vocal talent of the 1990s.

In a field where over-embellishment is *de rigueur*, Krall embodies the virtue of allowing songs to speak for themselves. Her philosophy is summed up in the title of her debut for the GRP label, *Only Trust*

Clive Davis on the Canadian singer and pianist, Diana Krall

Your Heart. "I think simplicity can be the hardest thing to achieve sometimes," she explains. "I'm constantly trying to work on that in my interpretations."

She makes it sound so easy. A funky pianist, she possesses a sensuous contralto. Admirers have likened her to Shirley Horn, Julie London and even Nina Simone. This year, following up the release of *All For You*, her album dedicated to the Nat King Cole Trio (released on GRP's Impulse! label), she stormed that holy of holies, the Oak Room at the Algonquin, and also appeared in a Carnegie Hall tribute to Ella Fitzgerald.

In spite of her early passion for the singing and playing of Fats Waller Krall was slow to see herself as a natural singer-

pianist. She still describes herself as "a Jimmy Rowles voice, a story-telling voice". She instinctively downplays her glamorous looks, too, preferring to make jokes at her "klutz" way of walking, and her fear of tripping over her high heels at a recent New York concert.

Today, much of the talk is about her prospects as "the female Harry Connick". Krall does see some musical parallels: "When I heard him playing on *When Harry Met Sally*, I thought 'Damn! Here's someone my age who's doing exactly what I want to do'."

The future, she thinks, lies in developing her trio, which follows Nat Cole's example in jettisoning a drummer. The result is an infinitely flexible ensemble. Krall will always remain a jazz animal first and foremost, but that does not mean she is banned from admiring the songs of Joni Mitchell or Sting.

● Diana Krall appears at the Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean St, London W1 0171-439 8722 next Tuesday

Blonde having more fun

The reinvention of Deborah Harry from post-punk icon into a unique and compelling new jazz voice continues apace. Respected and considerably heavier, she is almost unrecognisable as the brash singer with blonde of almost 20 years ago.

Her voice has grown up, too. Showing a depth and range hardly even hinted at in her former incarnation, Harry gave a commanding performance at Blackheath Concert Halls froming Jazz Passengers, one of jazz's more experimental outfits. Only a brief, deconstructed version of *The Tide Is High* made reference to her pop past.

Harry was confident and at ease with Roy Nathanson's avant-garde ensemble. She sang on every number as the Jazz Passengers veered excitingly, and sometimes wildly, between bebop, freeform, melodic acid jazz and the downright absurd. One minute they were sharp and spiky, the next sweet and easy, often all in the space of the same number.

Harry shone particularly on a swinging *One Way or Another* and a moving *Angel Eyes*, the old torch song given a new meaning by being dedicated on International Aids Day to those who have died in the past ten years.

Yet it is not quite the Debbie Harry show. Nathanson is still very much in charge but his squawking saxophone is under tighter rein. There was only one ten-minute, stretched-out, free-jazz trope. For an entire evening it would have been tedious: in this context it came as welcome variation, ending in a remarkable cacophony of sax, trombone and violin, sounding like a dawn chorus on acid, before Harry, the queen songbird, rejoined them.

The rest of the set was much more structured — not a word always associated with the Passengers — disciplined. Full marks for the discipline of the audience, too. Despite a few blonde T-shirts in evidence, nobody was crass enough to shout for *Heart of Glass*.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Death of a Salesman

by Arthur Miller



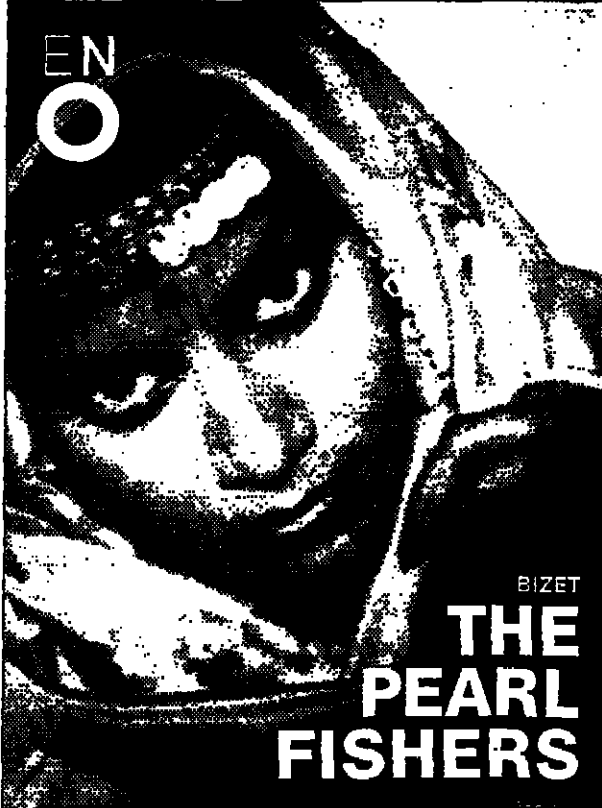
Alan Armstrong is outstanding. He doesn't demand attention, he commands it. Sunday Telegraph

"David Thacker's evocative production... stunningly effective" Daily Telegraph

"Miller's masterpiece" The Times

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Joseph Fiennes is the tormented lover in the RSC *Troilus and Cressida*

VENUE: Tonight at the Barbican



CHOICE 2

Rambert Dance Company pays tribute to Marie Rambert

VENUE: Tonight at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth

THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE 1

Fun and games as Griff Rhys Jones lights up the West End in the hearty Ben Travers farce *Plunder*



THEATRE 2

Ayckbourn's early comedy, *Family Circles*, gets a rare airing in Sam Walters's likeable Orange Tree staging

THEATRE: Ben Travers's light-fingered farce; an early Ayckbourn rediscovered

Humour among thieves

WHEN the Savoy Theatre was devastated by fire seven years ago, one prominent victim was Griff Rhys Jones, who had been about to arrive there in Peter James's revival of *Thark*. But neither the actor nor the director was going to let flames, bulldozers, restorers and Old Father Time destroy their joint devotion to Ben Travers. So here they are in another of the great farces of the 1920s successes, warming up the West End in a socially rather more acceptable way. Unlike Travers's usual "Aldwych farces", *Plunder* does not involve marital mis-



Making a splash: Kevin McNally as the gentleman thief Malone and Griff Rhys Jones as bumbling D'Arcy Tuck

Plunder Savoy

understandings. Rhys Jones is not required to crane his scraggy bulk beneath beds or in cupboards, as would have been the case in *Rookery Nook* or *Cuckoo in the Nest*. Instead, we find his D'Arcy Tuck clambering awkwardly through an upper window, almost falling backwards off the ladder, and generally making a silly ass of himself as he carries out a Wodehousian robbery and ineptly covers up its consequences.

Tuck has come from abroad with his dimpling fiancée, Sara Crowe's Joan, thinking she has inherited a mansion and a fortune from her grandfather. But they find that Mrs. Veal, the old man's obnoxious housekeeper, married him on his deathbed and nabbed the lot. They also find that one of her house guests is Kevin McNally's Malone, a former schoolboy and gentleman crook who is already planning to appropriate the former Mrs. Veal's misbegotten diamonds. What about a little joint

What follows has snobbish aspects that would, I suppose, have seemed less blatant in 1928, when the piece first appeared. Rachel Bell's Mrs. Veal is a brassy arriviste who dresses in a gaudy, vulgar mix of curtains, carpets and feathers. Her harmless son, Ramsay Gilderde's Oswald, opts for ludicrous plus-fours and a suburban accent, and is variously called a rat, a whelp and "an awful sort of thing like a prawn". The stage is set for

Raffles, improbably aided by Bertie Wooster, to punish the class equivalents of Jonson's Mosca and Molière's Tartuffe for their social presumption. And so they do, to the accompaniment of some saving hilarity. There is a classic scene in which Rhys Jones, having somehow humbled into the Veal boudoir, manages himself to snuff the chloroform meant to silence her. Suddenly he is slumping onto the bed beside her and

about Mrs. Veal's girth also proliferating — "you'd have trouble getting round me", yes, I'd have to take a taxi" the humour is not exactly oversophisticated. But who expects Travers to be Coward or Keydau? There was, and surely still is, a place for hearty fun, too.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE
This review appeared in late editions yesterday

Change partners

Family Circles Orange Tree

trating but serves the purpose well enough, which is to give sufficient flesh to three daughters and their three menfolk for us to note some differences when each succeeding scene switches the partnering.

At the start of a family gathering, panicky Jenny, with a smile taped to her jaw, is married to patiently critical Oliver; by testine she is with the hypochondriac David; and at mid-night not married at all but involved with young James. James, anxious and needy in this scene, has previously

been the latest babyface picked up by power-dressed Polly, and before that the embarrased jolly Deirdre, with her garb like a mad sailor. That is it, really, complicated by one of the ongoing situations, which is how to determine whether mother (Aurora Smith) is trying to kill father (Mark Kingston) by adding powdered glass to his favourite sandwiches, poison to his milk, drink, or whether it is the other way round: faultily repaired electric blanket, sabotaged kitchen steps. The second situation, and a familiar

Ayckbourn concern, suggests that people always marry the wrong partner, and even if they had married somebody else it would still be wrong. These murky waters are lightly stirred, not shaken, because the play's daring structure leaves little for psychological nuance. Ingenuity is almost all, astonishingly so in the last scene, the morning after, when the six younger characters are attached to a different partner each time they re-enter the room. The likeable performers in Sam Walters's production give the impression of enjoying every moment and here they are in order of mention: Julie Peasegood, Philip York, John Hudson, Damien Matthews, Jenny Funnell and Emma Gregory.

JEREMY KINGSTON

LONDON

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST The Christmas shows at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, direct this year's, with marionettes and automata telling the story of the Beast.

Young Vic The Co. SE1 0171-528 6983. Opens tonight, 7pm. Then at various times, 10.30pm, 1.30pm, 2.30pm, 7pm. Until February 1.

St John's Benefactors of the Martin Musical Fund gather together for an award-winning concert. The fund, founded to help bridge the gap between study and life-time professional status, is administered by the Philharmonia. Arguably Whelan plays Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, while Sarah Thorne plays the orchestra for Debussy's Preludes. Repertoire for choral and orchestra. Barbara Appleton, piano. Chopin's Piano Concerto No 2, which is followed by Mahler's Resurrection Symphony. Power and Professor's Violin Concerto No 2, played by Ralf Payne. The conductor is David Perry. SE1 0171-220 0511. Tonight, 7.30pm.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA Joseph Fiennes and Victoria Hamilton play the tormented lovers in Jan Juday's admired production. A grand cast includes Clive Francis, Richard McCabe and Philip Voss.

ART Albert Finney, Tom Courtenay and Ken Stott in an exceptionally riveting drama about friendship, unrequited love and an almost all-time classic. Matthew Warchus directs. Wyndham's, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 0171-363 1736. Tue-Sat, 8pm. Males Wed, 8pm. Sat, 8pm. Sun, 5pm.

BY JESSES Delightful musical created by Alan Ayckbourn and Andrew Lloyd Webber, based on the Wodehouse heroes first attempted 20 years ago, now entirely revised. Lyric, Sally Stanger. SW1 0171-494 5045. Mon-Sat, 7.45pm. Males Wed and Sat, 8pm.

CASEY ON DELIVERY Bradley Walsh in his first leading West End role in farcical comic about a man who writes for Michael Gough and directed by his dad, Ray. SW1 0171-369 1736. Mon-Fri, 8pm. Sat, 8.30pm and 8.50pm. Tue, 8pm.

THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT Commissioned play from comedian David Schneider in which he plays a single man leaving himself to his mother (Sheila Stead). He faces a girl who isn't nice and Jewish. Matthew Lloyd Jones directs. Hampstead, London. NW3 0171-729 9301. Opens tonight, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8pm. Males Wed, 8.30pm.

JOHN GABRIEL, BORIS KUMAR Paul Scofield, Vanessa Redgrave, Eileen

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Moxey

ELSEWHERE

BARBICAN 5th Street, EC2 0171-528 6983. Opens tonight, 7pm. Then at various times, 10.30pm, 1.30pm, 2.30pm, 7pm. Until February 1.

ELMWOOD Father and son, Timothy and Samuel West, are appearing on stage together for the first time as Falstaff and young Prince Hal in Henry IV, Parts I and II. English Touring Theatre's production of Shakespeare's epic also stars Gary Waddock.

DUNDRE Scottish Opera presents The Scottish Opera Collection, an innovative concert form of operatic excerpts. Richard Armstrong conducts a selection of arias and duets from some of the most loved operas and operettas, including Eugene Onegin, The Merry Widow and Carmen.

WIT LISA Mike and Susan McCulloch, soprano, Elizabeth McCormack, mezzo-soprano, Stephen Gould, baritone, Peter Brander, tenor.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only
Seats at all prices

ALFONS and Michael Bryant, directed by Richard Eyre. A mighty cast for a small play, concerned with guilt, remorse and reconciliation. National, Lyttelton, South Bank, SE1 0171-828 2221. Tonight, 7.30pm. In rep.

LAUGHTER ON THE 23RD Floor. Neil Simon's funny account of working as a team of scriptwriters for comedian Sid Caesar back in the 1950s. Gene Wilder plays Sid. Directed by Roger Haines.

MAX KILLER — A LIFE IN PICTURES. David Farr's celebration of cinema told in a mix of film and theatre. Theatres in London's West End. With Anthony Higgins, Emily Lloyd and Tracy Lister.

JOHN GABRIEL, BORIS KUMAR Paul Scofield, Vanessa Redgrave, Eileen

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and where indicated with the symbol (P) on release across the country

BEAUTIFUL GIRLS (15). A good cast in a true tale of a female friendship. 19th Mar. 12pm. Timothy Hutton and Uma Thurman. Director, Ted Demme. Odeon Kensington (01426 914 666).

CRIMINAL MINDS (15). Nasty thriller about a television crime-re-enactment programme, with Stephen Rea, Peter Postlethwaite and Sophie Aldred. Virgin Tricorder (0171-434 0031).

DRACULA DEAD AND LOVING IT (15). Heavy-handed Mel Brooks spoof, with Leslie Nielsen as an accident-prone Dracula. UCI Whitehall (0171-369 1736).

FEAR (18). Psychological horror movie. Mel Brooks in a comedy, with Mark Wahlberg and Reese Witherspoon. UCI Whitehall (0171-369 1736).

LONDON GALLERIES

Alain Crotte Colour Etching 0171-439 1868. Anthony d'Offay: Anselm Kiefer — I Hold All India in My Hand 0171-489 4100. Beckett: Elizabeth

Brancusi Pictures and Jewellery 0171-724 4837. Chris Baillie: The British Art of Burlington, 1780-1880 0171-439 7651. Christopher Hill: David

Lewis Recent Paintings 0171-235 0500. Carmen H. Dore: Pictorial "Juncus" 0171-636 1459. Llewellyn Alexander: A Feast of Food and Art 0171-420 1322.

The London Institute Top Marks Design 0171-514 6000. Matt: Royal Institute of Painters: Annual Exhibition 0171-930 6844.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Jonathan Miller returns to the British theatre after six years to direct a cast headed by Norman Rodway and Angela Thorne as the royal intriguers.

SWANWHITE Directorial debut for actor Timothy Walker in the British premiere of Shakespeare's fairy tale. Jules Maheu plays the princess whose love can save her doomed prince.

LONG RUNNERS Blood Brothers: Phoenix 0171-369 1736. The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged): Odeon 0171-369 1737. Don't Dress for Dinner: Duchess 0171-424 5070.

GREASE Cambridge 0171-436 1443. Oliver: Palladium 0171-494 5020. The Phantom of the Opera: Her Majesty's 0171-436 5400.

TOOTHY Shaftesbury 0171-370 5389. The Woman in Black: Fortune 0171-436 2338. Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatres.

THE VAIN (15). Fun and games with a burger van during the 1950 World Cup. Starring Peter Dinklage and

RODDY DOYLE novel, with Colin Meaney and David O'Leary. Director, Stephen Frears. ABC Tottenham Court Road 0171-363 6148. Clapham Picture House 0171-423 3323. Welham Hall Cinema 0171-727 6785.

REYNOLDS 01426 915333. Kensington 01426 914666. 01426 915603. Swiss Cottage 01426 914089. Virgin Picturama Road 0171-270 2639. Wimpole 0171-437 4343.

BRASSERIE OFF (15). Yorkshire colliery band fights for survival. Singing comedy with a few drops of vulgar wit. With Peter Dinklage and

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ART GALLERIES

NEFFES-DEGANT FINE ART BARNARD-HOUSE, VILLIARD — Drawing, Watercolor, Sculpture and Pottery. Tues 10.30-5.30. Sat 10.30-5.30. Tel: 0171-493 2201. Tel: 0171-493 2201.

PARKIN GALLERY 290A-290C, WYCHERLEY GATE, London SW1 0171-493 2201. Tel: 0171-493 2201.

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MUSIC 1



How politics and revolution changed György Ligeti from a Hungarian composer into an international one

MUSIC 2



The words of Samuel Beckett and the music of Morton Feldman join forces at Huddersfield

THE TIMES ARTS

RIISING STAR

Meet Charlotte Macleod, the woman behind an initiative to bring budding screen writers to light



OFFER

See Niamh Cusack play Rosalind in the RSC's acclaimed *As You Like It*, courtesy of The Times Theatre Club

CLASSICAL MUSIC: Paul Griffiths meets the composer György Ligeti, subject of a South Bank festival. Plus reviews

Serious pranks

IF "anarchy" is controlled chaos, then it is a reasonable description of the music of Mauricio Kagel, the Argentine composer whose 65th birthday was celebrated by the London Sinfonietta under Reinbert de Leeuw on Sunday. West, an instalment of *A Compas Rose*, receiving its London premiere, inhabits a twilight zone between high art

London Sinfonietta/
de Leeuw
Queen Elizabeth Hall

and low life, between classical, "Western" manners and African and Latin American influences, in which the players are called upon to do some unexpected things. The clarinet (Michael Collins) alternates between wild eruptions and smoochy bent notes. The percussionist, Keith Bartlett, was even more resourceful: first he produced a banjo, then mouth organs, and finally an axe, with which he laid to a log. Original effects are heard too in... *den 24.12.1931* (a British premiere), which recalls events on the day of Kagel's birth: Christmas Eve, 1931. The strings play on the back of their instruments; but the *piece de resistance* is the parody of a Nazi commercial, complete with tramping boots. The baritone Roland Hermann added a brilliant vocal contribution, as uproarious as it was chilling.

The *Orchestration-Strat* reproduces the effect of the mechanical organ that imitates an entire orchestra. A perverse pursuit, one might think, but hilariously done. In an age of conformity, Kagel's masterly eccentricity shines like a beacon.

BARRY MILLINGTON

The changer of the avant-garde



Being inside György Ligeti's studio, in a leafy, prosperous part of Hamburg, is a bit like being inside the chaotic order of one of his compositions. All is cubic or quadrilateral: the large desk at the window, tables, bookshelves, boxes of sketches, and piles of papers, CDs and scores, which imply a cascading confusion just held in check.

We talk about Sony's complete edition of his acknowledged works, among which only the larger pieces remain to be recorded: hence the sequence of concerts to be given by Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Philharmonia this season and next.

"I have no gift for conducting," he says, "but I can hear very well all the details, so at the recordings I'm like an audio engineer who is also the composer. And there are things that only I can judge, such as phrasing, articulation, the overall form. I am specially concerned with the large form, how you have a big arch. For instance, no recording of *Atmosphères* has what Hans Rosbaud and Bruno Maderna gave it in concert performances: the sense of one object having one space and blurred details."

One layer of the Ligeti tradition is the Hungarian culture he brought with him from Budapest in 1956. "Of course, the language is a glue. On the other hand, it was a terrible experience when the majority of the population got along with Hitler, so I have no Hungarian nationalist feelings, only very deep connections with the language, poetry, culture. During the three years after the Second World War, there was an absolutely wonderful revival of culture in Budapest, but this atmosphere hasn't returned after the dismantling of Soviet control: too much time has elapsed, I have the feeling that everything's become coarse. There's no refinement."

This year Ligeti made one of his occasional visits to Budapest to attend a concert which turned out to be more a political occasion. "Afterwards there was a party, and Istvan Lakatos, a writer and a very good, old friend, made a speech. We had founded an opposition circle in 1955 — although, by the time it became a

reality it had already been infiltrated by the secret police. I kept my distance then, so I wasn't a member of the club I founded — not for Groucho Marx's reasons, but because it was immediately under police control. Lakatos was in prison for six years, and he wrote an autobiography. And because I was in the West, he could put all the blame on me, as he was entirely right to do. So he made this speech, again pretending I had a very important role in the revolution, which is not quite true.

"If the Soviets hadn't flattened cultural life, if there had been normal democracy, I would have had a totally different evolution as a composer. There are pieces from

poetry to music. I hated this: the salon communists. I tried to make a music which was totally different, with a lot of traditional elements.

"But then my hatred of Post-Modern architecture, and also of a lot of neo-tonal Post-Modern music, pushed me another way — not back, but in another modernistic direction, of which maybe the piano études are the clearest product.

"It comes partly from being open to all cultures. For instance, I have a very strong interest in late 14th-century music, because it's a neglected style of the highest complexity. I was always attracted to very complex ornament — as in Maori art, or Viking art, or Arabic decoration in Granada, or the Book of Kells — and therefore my deep interest in African music from south of the Sahara, or gamelan music. I am not interested in non-European music because it's non-European; but the fact that we had no contact with this music means that it is refreshing. The recombination of old, existing traditions can produce something completely new."

Ligeti is at work on the sixteenth of his piano études. "Then I want to begin the big challenge: *Alice in Wonderland*" (the work that was commissioned for the Coliseum more than a decade ago). "Over the past ten years I've made a lot of sketches, but not really musical ones. My sketches are rather key words, because to write music down takes too long. When I imagine some music, I label it with a name — like when you work on a computer, you put something on an address. For me, the address might be the name of a composer — Scriabin, for instance. Not that you would hear any Scriabin influence, but because a certain harmonic association in the Tenth Sonata would remind me of something in my imagination."

What will his *Alice* be like? "Very, very light, and full of humour and moral. Just Lewis Carroll." And for what kind of singers? "I could tell you, but it would be more gentlemanly to tell English National Opera first."

● Clocks and Clouds, Part 1, a festival of the music of György Ligeti, begins at the South Bank tomorrow (0171-960 4242)

6 In my music there's no continuity of style. It's always cut 9

Witness to the death of music

LISTENING to Morton Feldman's *Samuel Beckett: Words and Music* and Dieter Schnebel's *Glossalie 94*, performed in that order at one of the last events of the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, was like witnessing a prophecy of the final renunciation of music. Feldman's score could scarcely be more minimal but what little there is of it — a few fragmentary scales, a sequence of chords, a little

tune — is a whole *Parsifal* in comparison with Schnebel's inchoate scenario. Beckett's radio play *Words and Music*, which was first performed in 1961 with music by his cousin John Beckett, demands some such score as Feldman completed just before his death in 1987. Inclined though he was by then to write pieces of inordinate length punctuated by longer and longer silences — his Second

Ensemble Recherche Huddersfield

String Quartet lasts up to six hours — Feldman restricted himself in this case to the playwright's bleak economy. His mixed ensemble of seven instruments represents music while an actor represents words and a third player, Croak, goads them into some kind of reconciliation.

Given the resources of the Lawrence Batley Theatre, Ensemble Recherche might have found some more illuminating stage setting for the piece than complete darkness. But the visual blank was at least true to the radio origins of *Words and Music*, and whatever the obscurity in the meantime, the final utterance of *Words* merging into melody was, as Omar Ebrahim performed it, a peculiarly moving moment.

If Beckett saw some future for words and music, Schnebel apparently sees no

hope for either. But for the enterprise of an undidactic cellist, who clearly could not resist stroking the strings with his bow and producing melodious sounds from time to time, there would have been no instrumental music in Ensemble Recherche's interpretation of *Glossalie 94*: the general idea was to use the instruments in any way other than that for which they were made. There was no vocal music either, except for the sounds produced by rhythmically spoken and excitedly coloured phonemes, disconnected sentences in a variety of languages.

Ensemble Recherche presented the piece as a series of nonsense scenes which for some members of the audience were excruciatingly funny, for others the end of art as we know it, and for most of us, well, on reflection, we've heard it and seen it all before.

GERALD LARNER

THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

LONDON
Barbican
Dec 16-21, 23, 27, 28, 30 (7.15pm)
● NIAHM CUSACK and Liam Cunningham play Rosalind and Orlando in Steven Pinnock's critically acclaimed Royal Shakespeare Company production of *As You Like It*. Theatre Club members can buy best available stalls or circle seats for just £15 (normally £18 to £24.50). Tel 0171-438 8891 (Mon to Sun 9am to 8pm), quoting your membership number. Offer ends Dec 14

Centre Stage
Dec 31
● USHER in the New Year in style. For just £79 (normally £99) per person, members will be served a delicious four-course dinner with a bottle of champagne at midnight. Between courses, West End artists will entertain with songs from London, Broadway and beyond. The evening commences at 10.30pm with carriages at 1.30am. Tel 0800 335388

Jermyn Street Theatre
Dec 18-20 (8pm)
● TICKETS £10 (normally £12.50), including a glass of wine, to Issy Van Randwyck's new Christmas show, *Tied up with String*. Tel 0171-287 2815

Old Vic Theatre
Dec 2-3
● SIMON WARD, Carol Drinkwater and Deborah Grant star in Peter Hall's acclaimed production of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*. Best available seats £12 (normally £24) for all performances except Saturday evenings. Tel 0171-928 7616

Civic Centre, SB15
Dec 17-20
● TWO £5 tickets for the price of one to the pantomime, *Aladdin*. Tel 0171-753 3232

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GLENROTHES
Ruthie Halls
Dec 9-14
● SAVE £2 on tickets (normally £5 to £7.50) to the musical, *Scrooge*. Tel 01592 611101

BILLINGHAM
Forum Theatre
Jan 7-9
● SAVE £2.50 on tickets (normally £8.50) to the pantomime, *Cinderella*. Tel 01642 532663

STOCKPORT
The Davenport
Dec 21-Jan 19 (except Dec 26)
● TWO £8 tickets for the price of one for *Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp*. Hurry, tickets limited. Tel 0161-483 3601

LEICESTER
De Montfort Hall
Dec 17-18
● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £13.50 to £17.50) for *Return to the Forbidden Planet*. Tel 0116-233 3111

WEXMOUTH
Pavilion Theatre
Dec 26-Jan 5 (2.30pm, 7pm)
● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £8.95 to £9.95) for *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Tel 01302 782225

SWINDON
Wyvern Theatre
Dec 12-13
● TICKETS £8 (normally £9.50 to £11.50) for the ultimate rock'n'roll show, *Freak Out!* Tel 01793 524481

GREAT BRITISH HOPES
Rising stars in the arts firmament
CHARLOTTE MACLEOD

Age 29
Profession: Director of the British Film Institute's Script Factory.
What's that? The Script Factory performs readings of as yet unproduced screenplays. The last performance this year, *Dark Blood* by Jim Barton, takes place at the National Film Theatre on the South Bank at 7pm tomorrow.

Who goes to these readings? "It's about 50 per cent Joe Public and 50 per cent Mr and Ms Film Industry," says Macleod.

Where did she get the idea from? "I borrowed it from something called *Fifth Night* in New York. We've had ten scripts, including ones by Christopher Hampton and Alan Scott, the writer of *Don't Look Now*." Thanks to the Script Factory, seven have "gone on further," says Macleod.

Background: After reading English at Manchester University, Macleod set up a company making television documentaries. She then moved to New York to work for the Independent Features Project, which facilitates independent film production.

What happens next? "In the long term I want to help filmmakers to meet each other and films to get off the ground."

GUY WALTERS

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With five million passengers, Stansted is set to join the high-flyers. Harvey Elliott, air correspondent, introduces a three-page report

Breaking the £100m barrier

Stansted airport is about to achieve "critical mass". This is the pivotal moment when the airport will cease to be a small, regional concern and will be considered grown-up enough to join the big boys.

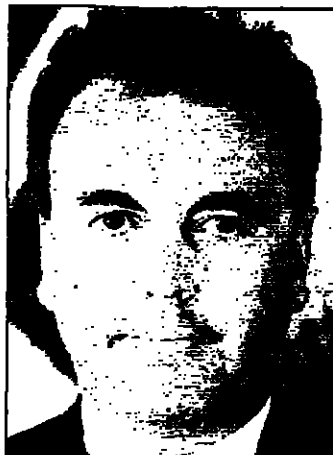
It will attract major international long-haul airlines and have the self-confidence to compete for the custom of international and domestic passengers of all kinds.

Two key events will give the airport in Essex that essential boost. First, it is about to make the first annual profit in its own right, emerging as a net contributor to the airport operator BAA.

And, secondly, the airport expects at any moment to be able to boast that within the past year more than five million passengers passed through.

The astonishing recovery of Stansted has yet to grab the attention of the leading international airlines. Work began on the new airport exactly ten years ago, and the new terminal was opened more than five years ago. But getting the message across, especially to foreign carriers, that Stansted is a serious competitor to Heathrow and Gatwick — even Schiphol and Paris — is not easy.

"We are spending more than £100 million over the next decade to double our passenger numbers from the present five million level and beyond," Terry Morgan, managing director, says. "I intend to be



Terry Morgan: ambitious

around as long as possible to watch these exciting developments."

When Stansted officials try to convince airlines from, for example, America to bring their jets in and begin direct services, they are reminded immediately of the £6 million losses incurred by American Airlines after they moved there in 1992.

The giant US carrier started regular services from Stansted to Chicago, but although nearly all its seats were filled, there was a dearth of business class passengers prepared to pay enough to make the service viable. And exactly one year later they gave up the unequal fight and closed down the service.

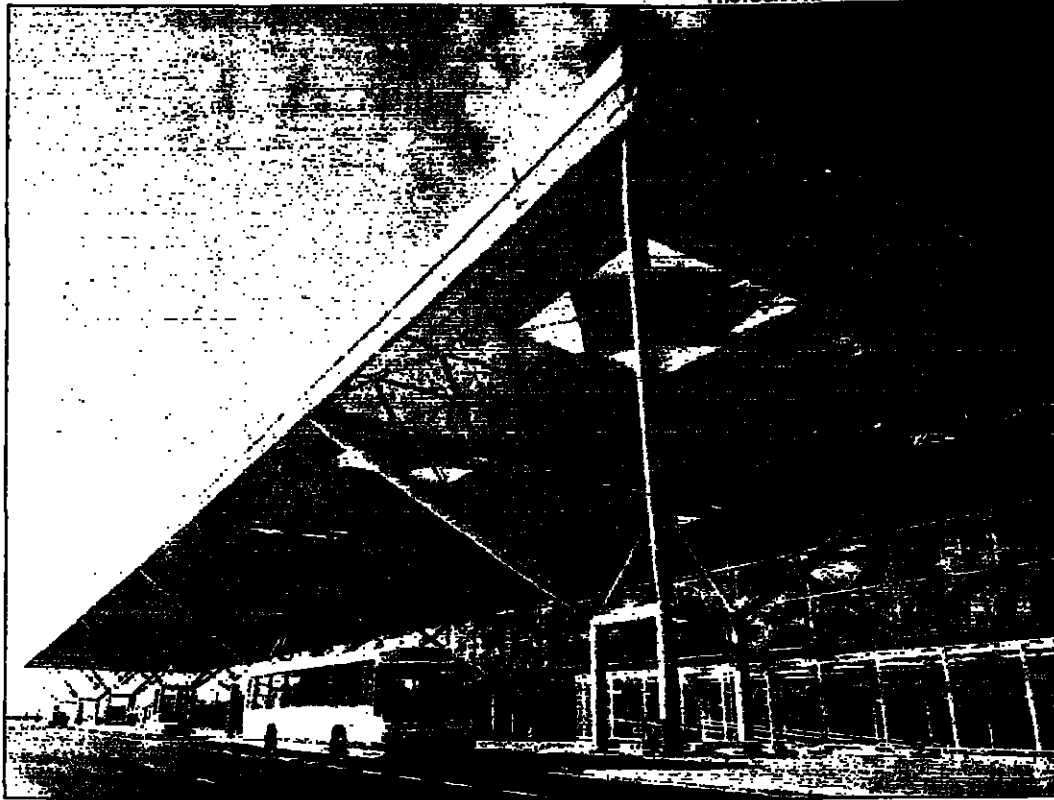
Stansted claims that there were many other reasons for the failure of the project, but so far their arguments have been ignored, while the sad song of American has been listened to, and has acted as a warning to others.

Now, however, Stansted managers are convinced they are close to making the breakthrough. In the past year 36 per cent of all passengers using the airport were travelling on business, they say, a higher proportion than Gatwick or Manchester and second only to Heathrow.

There has also been such an increase in the number of short-haul routes that the all-important transfer passenger will soon be able to fly into Stansted from big cities around the world and find a smaller aircraft waiting to take him or her on to their destination.

Stansted is also benefiting from the success of Heathrow and Gatwick. Heathrow is now virtually full throughout the day and take-off and landing slots at Gatwick are increasingly difficult to obtain at peak times. So the big international airlines may be forced to look to Stansted if they want to expand.

El Al has already discovered the benefits of operating from the airport and is now increasing its highly lucrative New York service to four times a week. If El Al can succeed so can others, say Stansted officials. Air UK, which has made the airport its base, is opening a



Striking glass and steel entrance to Stansted airport welcomes the traveller to world-class facilities

new route to Inverness, Suckling Airways will fly to Zurich on the first Air UK franchise deal, and there is a big increase in the number of inbound charter flights from Scandinavia.

They point out that Stansted is now the sixth largest airport in Britain and that the 4.7 million passengers who used it in the past 12 months represent a growth rate of 27 per cent, maintaining its position as the fastest growing airport for the past five years.

They are proud that Stansted serves 43 scheduled destinations, that 76 per cent of all passengers fly on scheduled services, that they

have grabbed 21 per cent of the British domestic air market and that a quarter of passengers now use the Irish routes.

Market research has shown that the most popular destination is Dublin, that 24 per cent of passengers use the train which takes 41 minutes to Liverpool Street, and that 38 per cent of passengers are what pollsters call the "ABs". It shows too that 35 per cent come from London, 34 per cent from the South East and — surprisingly — only 25 per cent from East Anglia. More than 65 per cent of Stansted's passengers are men and 70 per cent of them travel alone.

But statistics alone are not enough. What really matters is the perception of passengers using the airport and almost without exception someone who has tried it once will not only return themselves, but also tell others to try it.

Typical is Sue Cohen, 38, a secretary from Ilford. "I live only ten minutes away from the Redbridge junction of the M11 and Stansted is 40 minutes' drive away," she says. "But I did not use the airport until February this year and then again in May. Now I am going again to Amsterdam. I would actually pay more to fly from Stansted."

Morgan's rite of passage

Terry Morgan expects to achieve his "rite of passage" early next year when Stansted reaches the magic figure of five million passengers a year. "This is the level at which an airport joins the big boys," he says. Mr Morgan, 39, the managing director of the airport, is also buoyed by the likelihood of Stansted moving into an operating profit in 1997 — a significant turning point for what, even he admits, was considered a "white elephant". While most attention has been focused on developments at Heathrow — where the inquiry into the Terminal 5 expansion drags on — Stansted has been quietly getting on with the job of providing an effective alternative to both Heathrow and Gatwick. "I am very encouraged by the top-level support we are getting from BAA," Mr Morgan says.

What has driven the airport's growth, he believes, has been a consistent effort to meet the needs of travellers — both on business and for pleasure — from a catchment area which includes the rejuvenated Docklands to the east of London. "There is no doubt that things are really buzzing in Docklands and we are getting the benefit of that," he says. But he also suggests that there is "no substitute for word-of-mouth endorsement". Mr Morgan believes that once an air traveller has used the airport, with its ease of access and relatively quick transit time through the terminal, the lure of its bigger London rivals wears off.

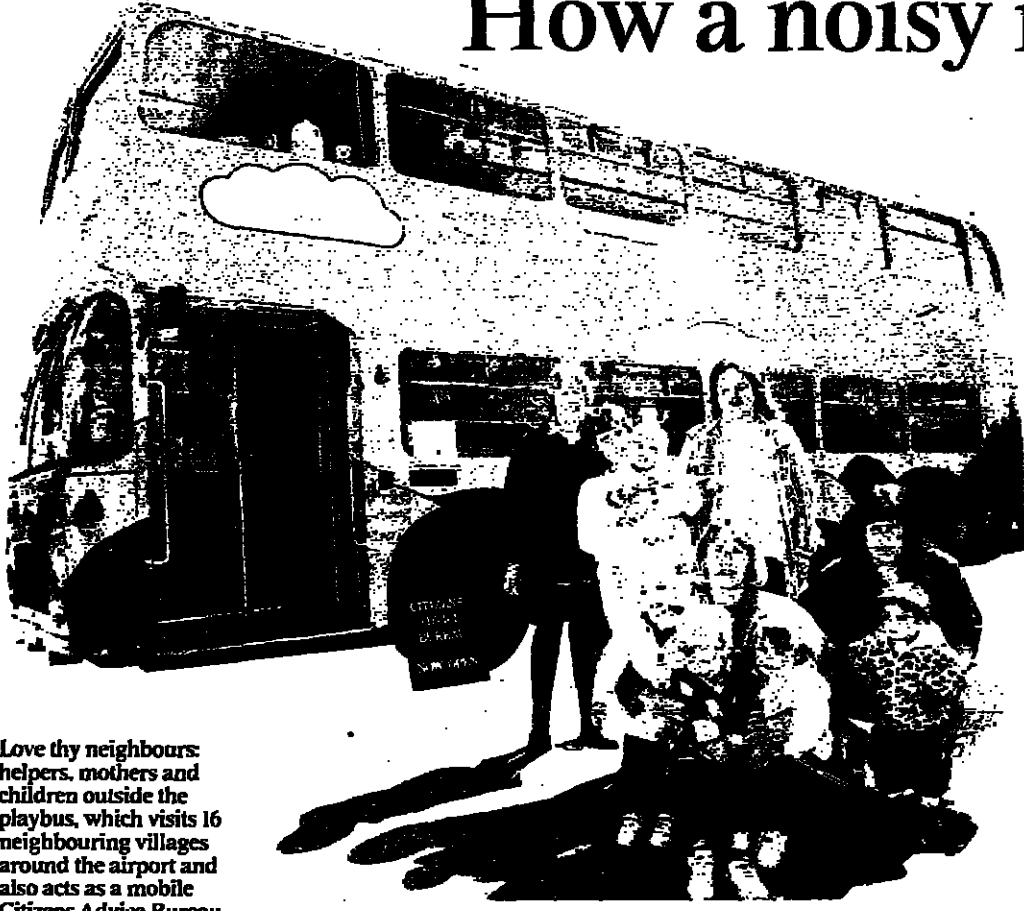
"One of our main challenges is simply letting companies, and those who organise their travel arrangements, know what we have to offer in the frequency of services and destinations covered," he says. "Those who think of us as a charter airport are surprised to learn we are primarily offering scheduled services for business travellers."

For most of his tenure at Stansted, Mr Morgan, regarded as a "high-flyer" within BAA, for whom he has worked most of his career, has been trying to keep the airport afloat and luring small niche carriers into using its top-class facilities. He has also had to cope with the disappointment of not having a major transatlantic airline based at Stansted since American Airlines pulled out in 1993.

"We have had to rethink our strategy a bit," he says. "Our aim is to develop a comprehensive short-haul network of routes feeding into Stansted to offer travellers the best connections into mainland Europe and domestically. The more inter-linking we can offer, the better the likelihood of attracting a long-haul transatlantic carrier to the airport." Meanwhile, Mr Morgan is pressing on with the expansion of Stansted, including a new domestic satellite, to cope with the increasing number of internal flights.

DAVID CHURCHILL

How a noisy neighbour makes amends



Love thy neighbours: helpers, mothers and children outside the playbus, which visits 16 neighbouring villages around the airport and also acts as a mobile Citizens Advice Bureau

As Stansted has developed the unofficial third London airport, its managers and staff have worked hard to lessen the protests that inevitably surround the workings of a major airport. Initiatives are constantly being undertaken to reduce the noise from the tens of thousands of planes that use the airport every year and the fines imposed on those which break noise limits are ploughed into local community projects.

More than £3 million has been spent on landscaping to make the site easier on the eye and to muffle the sound from runways. Airport staff run regular fundraising events to benefit local charities. Stansted is also helping to sponsor the "buffy bus" which tours the villages in the Uttlesford council area providing play facilities for the under-fives and a respite for their parents. The bus, which is staffed by a qualified playleader, visits the villages for two hours in the morning and afternoon.

"A recent Gallup poll undertaken for the local council shows that three out of four residents consider, on balance, that Stansted is of benefit to the area, with convenience for holidays and employment prospects at the forefront,"

Tony Dawe on the way the local villages benefit from the airport

Terry Morgan, the managing director of Stansted, says:

"As you might expect, aircraft noise troubles people the most. We recognise this and measures have been introduced to minimise noise to a level which is unavoidable."

One person who knows just how angry aircraft noise can make local people is Catherine Whitbourn, the airport community relations executive who runs the noise unit. It receives more than 5,000 complaints a year.

"I have been shouted at, sworn at, threatened with violence and accused of some amazing things," she says. "One lady blamed me personally for stopping her horses breeding and another caller accused me of killing thousands of pounds worth of koi in his pond." Complaints are checked by us-

ing the airport's £1.3 million MVA computer system, which identifies the offending aircraft, its height and location by matching the time of the complainant's call and post-code. The airport's three fixed noise monitors are being increased to eight and mobile ones are available for an unexpected spate of calls.

Aircraft taking off are supposed to follow noise preferential routes drawn up by the Department of Transport to lead them away from built-up areas. The department has also set noise limits for take-offs and these are monitored by the airport, which surcharges offending operators between £500 and £1,000.

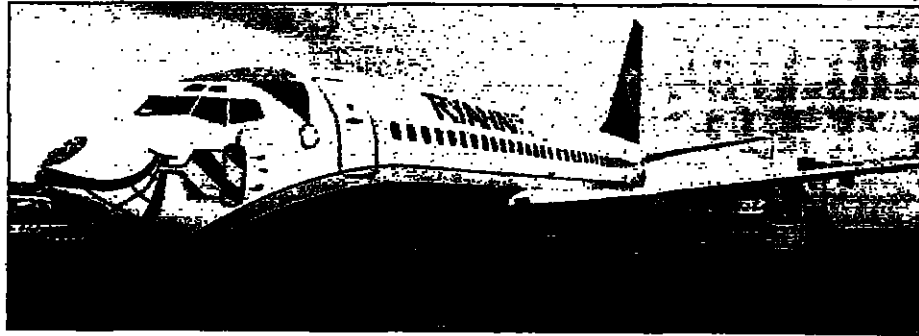
The fines are paid into a noise infringement fund, which is used to help local projects. Recent beneficiaries have included the First Roding Scout pack, which received funds for new camping equipment, and the people of Elsenham who received a contribution towards an extension to their village hall.

Stansted airport has also introduced measures to reduce the noise nuisance by offering discounts on landing charges for quiet aircraft and imposing premiums rates for the noisiest.

The budget gateway to Ireland

In the past year-and-a-half, the services to both Dublin and Belfast have improved beyond recognition

DOMESTIC ROUTES



Ryanair's dominant position on the Dublin route has been challenged by Aer Lingus, below



Stansted to Dublin during the week, with three flights on Saturdays and Sundays. But even with a lead-in price of £69, Aer Lingus has found it difficult to break Ryanair's stranglehold on Stansted. "The route did not begin as strongly as we would have liked, but progress is very steady and we expect numbers to continue to grow in 1997," Mr Conroy says.

Part of the problem is Ryanair's greater frequency — with up to 14 flights a day in both directions — as well as the fact that Ryanair's "no

frills" concept means that it can still offer lead-in prices £10 below Aer Lingus at £59 return. Like all such prices, however, the cheaper the ticket the greater the restrictions and the less likelihood of availability.

However, Tim Jeans, commercial director of Ryanair, says that the airline offers about 70 per cent of its capacity at the lowest fare. He also says Ryanair has an 83 per cent market share on the route, carrying more than 700,000 passengers a year. The Dublin route is the only

one out of Stansted where there is competition between any two of the 11 scheduled carriers using the airport. Industry analysts remain unconvinced that the market can bear such competition, with Air Belfast as a recent example. Dublin, however, has a special significance for Stansted because it serves as one of its strategic North Atlantic links via Aer Lingus's New York flights.

Ryanair has also become a significant carrier to Scotland with its Stansted to Glasgow Prestwick service, launched

just over a year ago, with cheapest fares set at £49 in what has become a fiercely competitive battle with other low-cost carriers operating out of Luton airport.

The leading UK domestic carrier out of Stansted, however, is Air UK, which has been voted the top domestic airline for the past two years by readers of *Executive Travel* magazine. It serves Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Newcastle and recently launched a service to Inverness with an introductory fare until December 20 of £99 return. The Stansted to Inverness flight operates from Monday to Saturday, with the return services operating from Sunday to Friday.

Air UK has also just launched an Internet booking service for flights from Stansted, enabling travellers to select flights, make reservations and pay, all from their personal computer. Although the airline has had a Web site for the past year — which is accessed about 50,000 times a week but only provides information — the new facility means it can also accept reservations by credit card. Tickets are then collected from the ticket desk at Stansted.

Stansted's Manchester flights, three a day each way during the week, are operated by Manx Airlines under the British Airways Express brand, a franchise operation which means the planes fly under BA livery and with BA service standards.

Stansted is an important airport for summer charter flights to most Mediterranean destinations, including Spain and the Balearic Islands. The airport will also be used by Unijet and Thomson Holidays next summer to fly to Florida, using the new Sanford airport rather than Orlando International.

£115
return
Dublin Breaks

For a great value offer from Stansted to Ireland, here's the deal.

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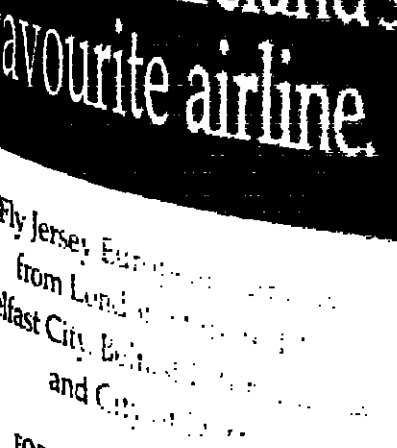
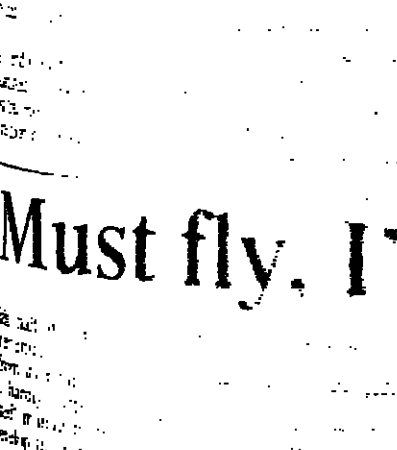
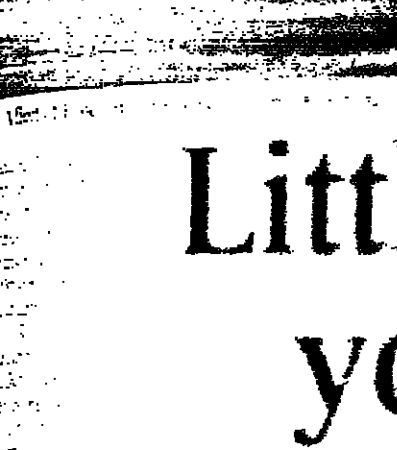
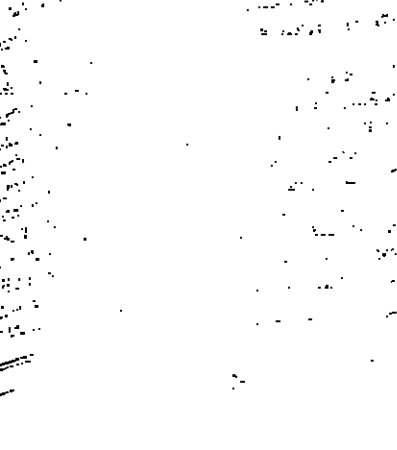
For details call Aer Lingus on (0181) 569 4001 or contact your travel agent.

Aer Lingus

Fare quoted excludes Air Passenger Duty and is subject to some conditions and availability. Advance booking is recommended. Fare not valid for travel from December 17th to 31st inclusive. New fare of £133 per person after Christmas. <http://www.aerlingus.ie>

This is a

HOTEL



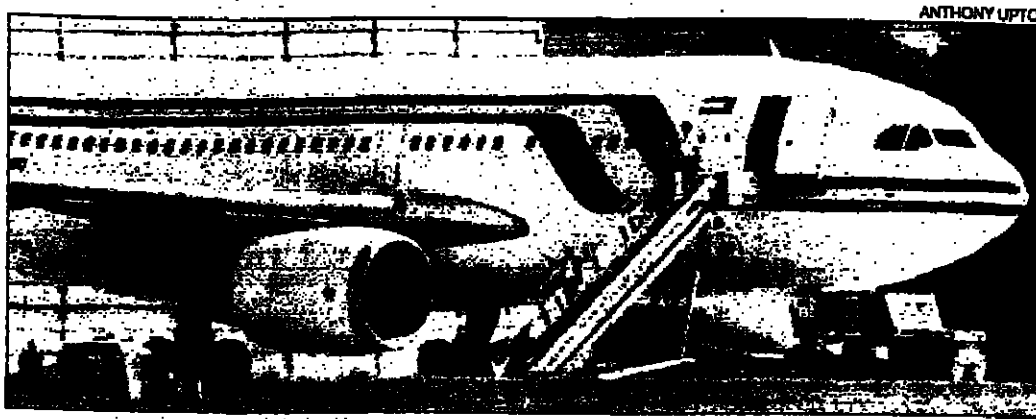
This is a hijack — quick, get me to the Stansted Hilton

HOTEL

When the 163 passengers and crew from the hijacked Sudan Airways flight last August were forced to spend three extra nights at Stansted while police completed their questioning, it was perhaps fortunate that they could stay at the Hilton National hotel at the airport. *David Churchill writes.*

Alex Nicholl, general manager of the 240-room property, says: "Our regular business guests tend to be away on holiday, so we were able to accommodate all the passengers and crew in the hotel. The police wanted to keep everyone together, so it was an ideal arrangement." The cost of the unexpected influx of guests was borne two thirds by the police and the rest by the airline.

The Hilton, which also has the attribute of being the largest hotel in East Anglia, is proving increas-



Drama on the runway at Stansted: a hijacker, hands held up in surrender, leaves the Sudan Airways plane watched by police and, right, the airport's Hilton hotel

ingly popular, not only with business and leisure travellers using the airport, but also as a focus for local business meetings. To meet this demand, the hotel has recently opened five two-room suites which, Mr Nicholl says, "are ideal for small meetings or informal receptions". Extra meeting and

conference rooms within the hotel have also been added. He says: "Because we are so convenient for the airport, we regularly have groups of executives fly in from all over the UK and the Continent just for a meeting with their colleagues in one of our rooms."

About two thirds of the hotel's

normal business is just for one night, either to catch an early flight or after arriving late in the evening, with those staying for two or three days usually for business reasons locally.

Standard room rates from next month are £103 for a single and £115 a double, although the corpo-

rate rate comes down to about £93. The new suites cost £160 a night.

The hotel, which has triple glazing to minimise aircraft noise, also offers a restaurant and room service, along with a business centre and leisure club with pool, gym, whirlpool bath, sauna and steam room. Not surprisingly, the

leisure club is popular with local residents as well as overnight guests.

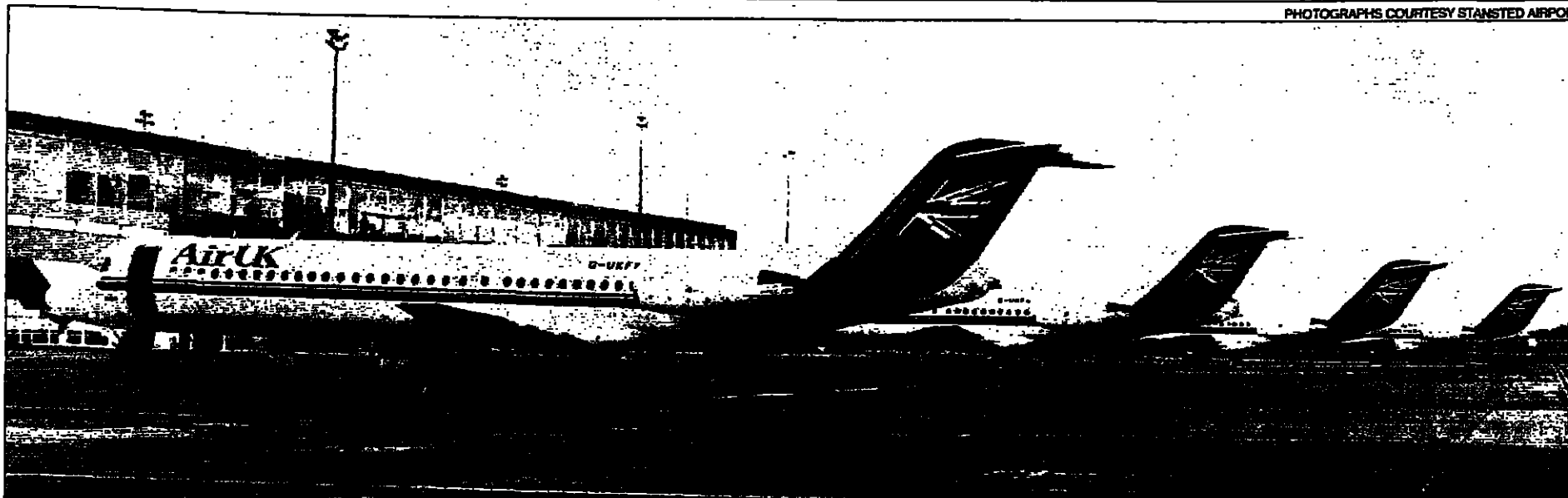
Though occupancy is highest during the week, the fall-off in numbers of business travellers at weekends means that the hotel also offers attractive weekend break packages for those wanting

to use it as a base to explore East Anglia. Prices start at £85 a person for two nights' accommodation, along with breakfast and dinner, and can include golf and beauty treatment options.

One convenient alternative option to the Hilton is available about four miles from the airport at the Birchanger Green motorway service area just off junction eight on the M11. Late last year a budget Travelodge hotel was opened by Forte, since taken over by Granada, offering rooms at a rate of £36 to £50 a night.

This 60-room lodge property — renamed Stansted Travelodge — does not seek to compete with the full services offered by the nearby Hilton but aims to provide value with a "no-frills" package. Each room can accommodate up to three adults, as well as a child under 12.

● Hilton National: 01279 680800; Travelodge: 0800 850950.



A fleet of Fokker 100s owned by Air UK, the leading Stansted operator. The airline says that it "is firmly positioning itself as a carrier for business travellers"

Suckling Airways may not be the name on most frequent flyers' minds when they think of Stansted. But since the end of October this Cambridge-based airline has taken over Air UK's Rotterdam route to provide four return flights a day to the Dutch port.

Merlin Suckling, who along with her husband owns and runs the airline, says: "We have been flying for more than ten years from Cambridge to Amsterdam and other destinations. When Air UK decided to pull out of the route, we jumped at the chance of expanding from Stansted with all its facilities."

Air UK moved its Rotterdam service to London City Airport after the success of its Amsterdam service from there, enabling Suckling to experiment with different flight times from Stansted. "We are," Mrs Suckling, says "the first flight out of London to Rotterdam, leaving at 7am and arriving at 9am Dutch time."

She is enthusiastic both about Stansted — believing that "most business travellers from the region must be mad

Little airline helping you to go Dutch

to battle their way to Heathrow — and Suckling's reputation with its customers, which she claims is based on personal service. She adds: "We serve fresh food, grown locally in East Anglia."

Suckling is not the only Stansted airline to recognise the value of the airport's European connections. Ryanair, which is the market leader on the Dublin route (and also serves Cork and Knock), has its own continental plans. Tim Jeans, Ryanair's commercial director, says: "Our expansion now centres on Europe and next year we are planning to launch services from Stansted to the Continent."

Ryanair has just acquired six Boeing 737s from Lufthansa and next month is

moving its sales and marketing staff from Dublin to Stansted. Mr Jeans, however, is not saying yet which routes Ryanair wants to adopt and whether or not they will be in competition with other Stansted airlines, especially Air UK.

Air UK, 45 per cent owned by the Dutch airline KLM, and with the balance held by British Air Transport (Holdings), is the key operator at Stansted. It operates international services from Stansted to Brussels, Jersey, Copenhagen, Paris, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Munich, Florence, Milan, Amsterdam and Zurich.

Tony Le Masurier, Air UK's marketing and sales director, explains that Air UK "is firmly

positioning itself as a carrier for business travellers, serving the business cities of Northern Europe and especially providing flights for those involved in financial services and the oil and gas industries". For that reason, the airline recently decided to scrap its services to Nice and Madrid.

The airline's strategy in wooing the business traveller is, explains Mr Le Masurier, focused on "increasing the frequency and timing of our scheduled services which all the surveys show is what the business traveller really wants from short-haul European flights." Frequent flyers, he believes, do not want to pay extra for an in-flight business-class service,

although the recent decision by British Midland to launch a European business-class indicates the counter-argument.

Extra frequencies have been introduced, for example, on flights from Stansted to Düsseldorf — from three to four times daily — and the winter schedules include extra flights to Copenhagen and Zurich during the week. Leisure travellers are not totally ignored: there are extra Saturday flights to Düsseldorf, Brussels and Frankfurt.

Mr Le Masurier also points out that Air UK will soon unveil its new business lounge at Stansted, doubling the size of its existing lounge by taking over the adjacent Servisair lounge. The airline is also working with the airport on

developing its Fast Track service, although there is usually really only a problem with getting through passport control and security during summer, when charters use the airport.

One of Air UK's strengths, Mr Le Masurier adds, is the relationship with KLM and Schiphol airport, where Air UK is the largest foreign user. It carried more than one million passengers to and from Schiphol in 1995, about half of whom connected to and from KLM flights.

It is this "inter-linking" which is where Stansted's short-term future as an international airport is heading, given the problems of attracting a leading airline into using the airport. At present, the only direct service to New York (Newark) is via El Al, which uses its flights to and from Tel Aviv twice a week to pick up and put down passengers between the Stansted and New York leg.

The Israeli airline also provides a service to Tel Aviv on the same flight.

DAVID CHURCHILL

Streamlined way to travel to the airport

RAIL LINK

As befits the rail link to Britain's fastest-growing airport, WAGN Railway last month polished its image and launched the new streamlined Stansted Skytrain, *Christopher Warman writes.*

All airports emphasise the speed and ease of road and rail links, and Jonathan Chaffield, brand manager for the Skytrain, says: "The new image and name-change will reposition the Stansted Skytrain, formerly the Stansted Express, as the fast, frequent and reliable rail link to London's third airport."

WAGN (West Anglia Great Northern) Railway is also adopting an "airline approach" by introducing

"hosts" on to its trains. The railway says its research has shown that train passengers need advice, help and improved customer care when travelling to London or departing from Stansted Airport.

The hosts will give advice and information on places to visit, check-in procedures and details of flight departures, as well as carrying out a complete ticket check on board. The presence of a host will also offer a security presence, helping to curb vandalism.

The journey between Liverpool Street and the airport takes 41 minutes and delivers passengers to a station which is an integral part of the airport terminal.



Stansted Skytrain: a new image for the express

Must fly, I'm just off to the shops

With half its annual revenue coming from its retail business, it is hardly surprising that Stansted's management is keen to develop the range of shops within the airport, on both sides of passport control.

David Churchill writes. While bigger competitors resemble a shopping mall more than an airport, Stansted has in the past looked puny by comparison, with plenty of floor space and fewer retailers.

The problem was that for the big-name retailers to open at Stansted, the airport needed to generate sufficient numbers of travellers to justify it. But now that it is just about to reach the five million passenger mark, the "critical mass" required by household-name retailers has been reached.

This year Boots the Chemist opened a branch in the check-in area, replacing Drug Store. HMV Music also opened this year. These newcomers join W H Smith — with its largest airport branch — Body Shop and T. S. B. The Olympus sports-goods shop, renamed Sports Division after the sale of Olympus this year, has an outlet, as has Accessorize, the women's fashion-accessory shop owned by Monsoon.

A chocolate's dream — a shop devoted to selling Cadbury chocolate products — is also very popular and was Cadbury's first airport shop of this type.

Duncan Tolson, head of Stansted's retail services, says: "With the big names and a range of shops now operating alongside, we have put together a retail offer which is attractive to people travelling through the airport as well as those just visiting. Local residents, as well as airport staff, clearly like what we are doing." About 20 per cent of airport retail sales are made to Stansted employees living locally. Immediate plans in the arrival area of the terminal involve relocating the car rent-

al desks to provide space for a Whistle Stop convenience store. This is aimed at arriving passengers who want to pick up essential groceries before going home.

By next summer, Mr Tolson expects another two or three shops to open alongside. "We are in the fortunate position of being able to learn from the retail experiences of both Heathrow and Gatwick, especially in persuading famous high street names to open a branch here," he says.

Other retailers already are Time Travel, which has replaced the Swatch shop, Music on the Move, an Israeli leather goods shop, Sunglasses Hut, Jersey Pearls and The Chocolate Box. There is also a W H Smith and a Tie Rack.

There is another W H Smith at the international satellite, plus a small duty-free outlet and a coffee shop. Catering alongside includes a Burger King outlet and a self-service restaurant and bar, while once through passport control the Granary restaurant has been smartened up. There are also longer-term plans for a new bar or pub-style area.

All the retail shops at the airport are covered by the BAA shopping guarantee which enables customers to return goods from anywhere in the world for a full refund. Shoppers can also benefit from BAA's customer-loyalty scheme, Bonus Points. This enables people to accumulate points towards either a BAA shopping voucher or earn extra "miles" from a frequent-flyer programme.

For information about Stansted shopping phone a 24-hour information line: 0800 844 844.

Once in the departure lounge most travellers head for the duty-free shop. This was refurbished last year, at a cost of £250,000, and provides a range of goods such as spirits, tobacco and perfumes. A specialist area for cosmetic sales — in addition to the perfume counter — has been a success, so much so that perfume and associated sales now outstrip the value of spirits and other drinks sold. There is also a Bally shoe-shop.

The duty-free shop is operated by the Swissair subsidiary Nuance, which acquired the duty-free operations of Alders International earlier this year. But BAA's decision to set up its own duty-free operation, called World Duty Free, means that the shop will come under BAA control next spring. There is unlikely, however, to be any significant change for the customer in the short-term.

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IN 41 MINS

Stansted Skytrain EXPRESS RAIL LINK

Noah's Ark of the sky

The curse of congestion and the lack of suitable take-off slots plaguing other major airports in Europe play no part in the progress of Stansted as a key player in the lucrative game of international air cargo.

While others may put up the shutters against freighters, the Essex gateway has the welcome mat extended as it builds a global reputation for efficient cargo handling.

Stansted, already the third largest British airport in terms of freight tonnage throughput, is the fastest-growing cargo gateway in Britain, expanding at the rate of 30 per cent a year.

Business has more than doubled in the past four years, from 50,000 tonnes in 1992 to 105,000 tonnes this year — plus 10,000 tonnes from Royal Mail.

The postal service alone operates about ten flights a night carrying letters and packages nationwide, using a range of aircraft from light piston-powered "puddle-jumpers" to larger Lockheed Electra transports.

At the other end of the scale, Stansted is also British base for Federal Express, the American air freight giant; TNT, the international parcel and cargo-carrier, and Britain's HeavyLift, which oper-

Chris Lockwood reveals how modern loading facilities can handle anything from flowers to a rhinoceros

ates, among other types, six Russian-built Antonov 124s, the largest commercial aircraft in the world. Stansted also handles regular freight operations for South African Airways, Air France, Lufthansa and Martinair, from The Netherlands.

According to Tony Astor, the cargo manager, part of the attraction for carriers is Stansted's location, coupled with its six dedicated stands for cargo aircraft up to the size of a Boeing 747.

He says: "It is possible for a load to arrive from, say, Central America, to clear customs and to be on its way in a truck on the M11 within an hour."

The roads are as uncongested as the airport, he adds, with a flexibility of available runway slots for cargo flights which would be unthinkable at Heathrow or Gatwick, where cargo clearance can take days.

"The main difference," he says, "is that 95 per cent of freight handled at Heathrow, for example, is from passenger aircraft. At

Stansted, 95 per cent of cargo comes from dedicated freighters. Only 5 per cent is from the holds of passenger flights."

Because cargo pallets from passenger aircraft tend to contain a variety of mixed loads, each requiring separate customs inspection, a freighter with a single type of cargo can be cleared much more quickly. This, plus rapid access to the airport's 200,000 sq ft cargo warehouse, gives Stansted an edge over rivals. Like the rest of the airport, the warehouse facility can be doubled in size to meet demand — regardless of when that decision may be taken for passenger terminal expansion.

Mr Astor believes that this built-in ability to expand within the pre-agreed limits of the airport's 2,300 acres of land guarantees Stansted a leading role in the future of air cargo. He also thinks that because most freighter aircraft today meet existing noise limits, the airport's 11pm-6am cur-

few does not apply to most of them, offering modern operators virtual 24-hour access; however, early versions of the Boeing 747, Boeing 707, DC8 and most Russian jets are prevented from operating during the night-time restriction.

Availability of suitable slots for freighters is another advantage. Mr Astor says. It is an increasing attraction at Stansted as the noose of congestion tightens around other airports.

Stansted's freight future will continue bright for two other reasons, according to Mr Astor.

First is the need for air trade between Europe and parts of the world where shifting political situations bring those countries back into the global trading fold. With little or no room at Heathrow or its major European rivals, Stansted is in a position to benefit.

"Secondly," he says, "there is the phenomenal boom in demand for fresh produce."

A recent addition to the Stansted freight scene is MK Airline of Kenya, bringing in 40 tonnes of fresh vegetables daily. There is also a daily DC10 full of flowers flown in from Central America by Martinair.

A more exotic load imported recently was a rhinoceros for a zoo in the South East.



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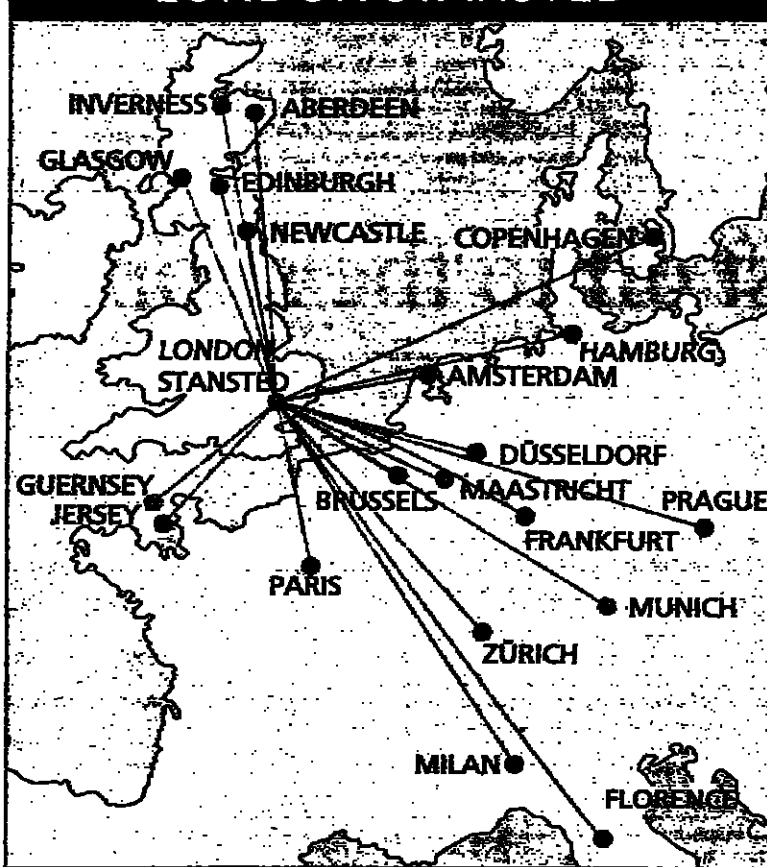
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They arrive either in their own, in corporate or chartered jets, ranging from small Cessnas to Boeing 747s. This year, the number of private business flights handled by Stansted will verge on 10,000, compared with 8,600 the previous year.

As their numbers have grown, so too have the three companies that handle business aviation at Stansted. Between them, Inflight Engineering Services, Metro Business Aviation and Universal Aviation can offer almost every service, including meals in executive rooms, crews to fly the jets and mechanics to overhaul the engines.

"There is nothing we cannot do," Graham Deans, managing director of Inflight's jet centre at Stansted, says. "We do all the VIP catering for Saudi royal flights, run our own restaurant with two chefs on site and offer flight crews their own bedrooms with en suite showers."

The company is equipped to maintain a wide range of aircraft, from the smaller Gulfstream jets to the BAe 146, which can carry more than 100 passengers on commercial flights. Inflight is planning a new hangar to maintain small jets and is recruiting more

engineers for next year. "The corporate market is beginning to change," Mr Deans adds. "Even wealthy people are looking to keep costs down."

"Our operation is centralised at Stansted because we believe that the airport has a great future, especially as business aviation finds it increasingly difficult to obtain take-off and landing slots at Heathrow."

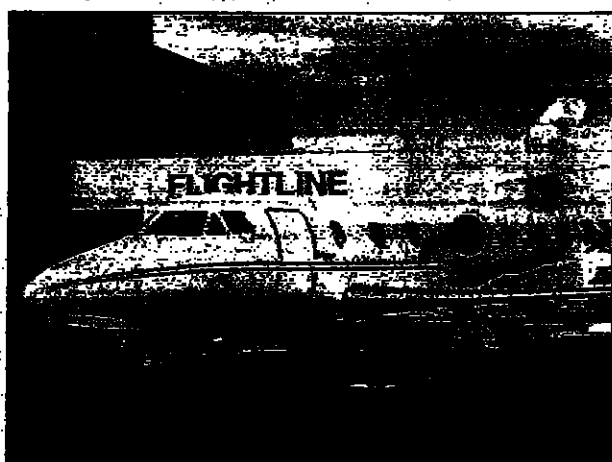
Karl Bowles, of Universal Aviation, agrees that congestion at Heathrow has helped the growth of business aviation at Stansted. "If you have a private jet, you want it to take off when you are ready, and not when air traffic control can find you an opening," he says.

"Its proximity to London makes Stansted a good alternative and our customers are happy to be driven down the motorway, or take the helicopter to Battersea heliport."

In addition to handling flights at Stansted, Universal also arranges routing across Europe. The company has a computer link to Eurocontrol's central flow management unit at Brussels, which allows it to obtain slots for business flights across the Continent.

Metro (formerly Hunting) Business Aviation also provides a wide range of services. Metro closely guards the confidentiality of its clients, which is hardly surprising for a company that is part of the Al Fayed Harrods empire. Its centre at Stansted provides the ideal place for the famous to arrive and depart discreetly.

TONY DAWE



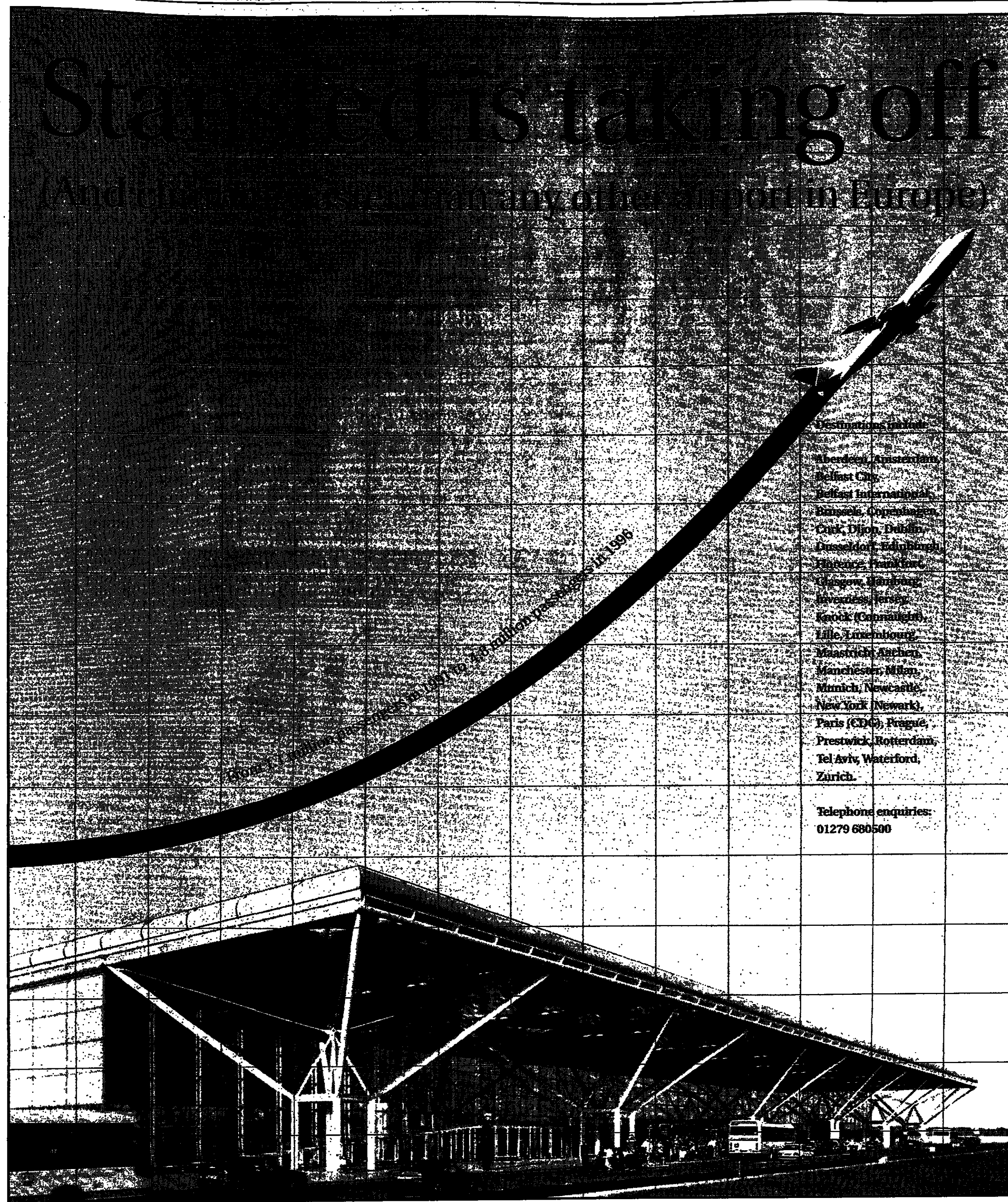
Lack of congestion has meant a boom in executive jets



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of marketing, this airport is already the fastest-growing in Europe.

Since 1991, Stansted has achieved an average annual growth of more than 27%.

This year, it recorded its first six-month operating profit.

Already, it handles nearly 5 million passengers a year, gives access to more than 40 destinations including New York, and has a higher proportion of business travellers than even Gatwick or Manchester; and Parliament has recently approved an increase in permitted annual

air traffic movements from 78,000 to 120,000.

For Britain's economy, the 21st century will doubtless bring its own challenges.

But at least, for London and the South East, there's a 21st century airport that's in great shape to help meet them.

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Polish up your rusty skills

For the past two decades, shorthand has not been popular. But times are changing, **Julia Lewis reports**

In the Seventies it gave way to audio machines. In the Eighties it was considered out of date. In the mid-Nineties it is increasingly being seen as a valuable skill. Shorthand is making a comeback.

Most secretarial recruitment consultants agree that if an employer is faced with two equally intelligent and articulate job applicants, one with shorthand and one without, the one who lands the job is invariably the one with the shorthand.

It is often at the higher levels that it is needed most. Amanda Maine Tucker, the recruitment consultant, says that shorthand is listed as a requirement for about 70 per cent of the "very top" jobs — those paying up to £30,000.

Executive secretaries or PAs at this level may need to note down quickly the gist of what the boss wants to say, before sending out a letter on his or her behalf. The secretary may need to take down detailed information or complicated messages when the boss gets in touch on the mobile phone. Scribbled shorthand is not enough.

Despite the demand, there is

a "huge scarcity" of good shorthand secretaries — senior and junior — says Clare Campbell, of the Grosvenor Bureau. "They can demand quite high salaries. I've got jobs coming through the door but not enough people of the right calibre to fill them," she says.

Most graduates, Ms Campbell finds, do not learn shorthand in the first place — believing, perhaps, that it carries too much of a secretarial stigma and may limit their prospects. In fact, it seems, the reverse is true. "If you have shorthand you're cutting out half the competition and you're also working very closely with your boss, who is telling you what is going on rather than giving you a tape to type," she says. "You're developing a working relationship and are more involved with what is happening."

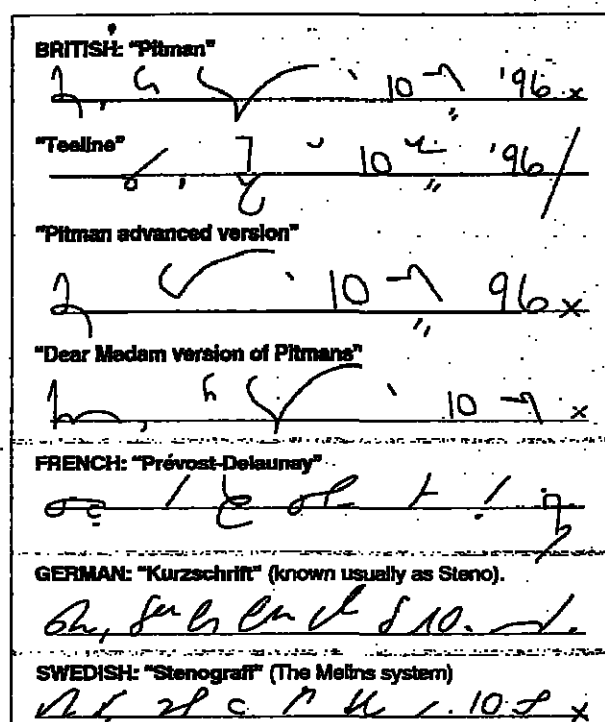
Another reason for the shortage is that although college leavers may reach 80 or 100 words a minute on a shorthand system, when they start work they often do not use their shorthand. Then, a few jobs down the line, they have lost their speed.

There is a problem, too, of

attitude: many young people either find shorthand boring or do not want to put in the effort needed. "But how else can you take minutes of meetings, or a quick note of a telephone call?" asks Rosemary Claxton, who teaches Teeline on a French bilingual secretarial course at Brunel University College. Mrs Claxton urges her students to keep their shorthand going by using it whenever they can or by practising with tapes.

So, is there a choice between Teeline, which is based on the alphabet, or Pitman 2000, a phonetic shorthand system? Not really. Although some colleges offer Pitman 2000 as well as Teeline, many have only Teeline, simply because it is quicker to learn and there is a demand for short courses. One that swears by Pitman shorthand is the Institut Français, in South Kensington, which also runs a bilingual course.

Jenny Gregory, head of secretarial skills, finds it more precise and faster. Students do worry about Teeline at first because they do not see the words in context, says Polly Canine, of Queens Marlbrough, in Cambridge. "You have the skeleton of a



Dear Sir, Thank you for your letter of 10 October, 1996...

word and you fill in the vowels. So if you'd written 'send me the bill' you'd know from the context it's not 'send me the bull'.

Pitman may well be faster — after all, it was a Pitman writer, Nathan Behn of New York, who in 1922 made the Guinness Book of Records

it hard to say. "They are both as good as the person using them and their knowledge of English," she says.

Teeline may be now dominant here but, apart from America where Gregg is used, it is still Pitman shorthand, invented by Sir Isaac Pitman in the 1830s, that is known around the world. Many other countries, such as France, Germany and Sweden, have their own systems of shorthand.

Bryan Coombs, who wrote several of the Pitman textbooks and helped to develop Pitman 2000, the version that succeeded Pitman New Era, believes that while shorthand is generally in decline around the world in terms of the number of people being taught, it is coming to be seen as an elitist skill, one much appreciated by employers.

"Shorthand says many things. It says not only can this person write shorthand at a given speed, but that they've proved they can learn something quite difficult — they have stickability, discipline and an organised mind," he says.

A foreign touch

HOW important is shorthand to a multilingual secretary? At the higher levels, the answer is very

"People with good shorthand are becoming rare animals," says Renate Reinhard, of Multilingual Services. "But if people are trained they can fairly easily convert Pitman 2000 or New Era to foreign languages, since Pitman is phonetic. I believe there are booklets you can buy, but very often people do it themselves."

"Often people learn shorthand, then it's not used for some years and when they get to the top it's required again, by which time they've forgotten it. It's like a language — you have to keep it up. Managers might do their own drafts, but at the one-to-one level you have people directing minutes verbatim, or over the phone, or just firing instructions very fast."

"As for foreign secretaries working in Britain, the German ones in particular can often do shorthand in three or four languages."

Alex Boyling, of Language Matters, agrees. "Germans are particularly

well trained and have shorthand in French, German and English. If they have the European Secretaries Association certificate we interview them automatically — their CVs look so good. The French also often have English shorthand. It doesn't help them to get higher wages, but might well secure them a job."

"Teeline as well as Pitman can be adapted to foreign languages, but we can never find people with really good shorthand when we need them."

So what kind of speed do you need? "Some clients do ask for 100 wpm; we've got one at the moment, a senior position for a managing director. But it's rare. People have got 140 words a minute; I got about 90. Most secretaries with shorthand have about 80."

"One small complication is that German shorthand is counted in syllables rather than words, so you have to calculate — 80 syllables equals 60 words. But we're used to that."

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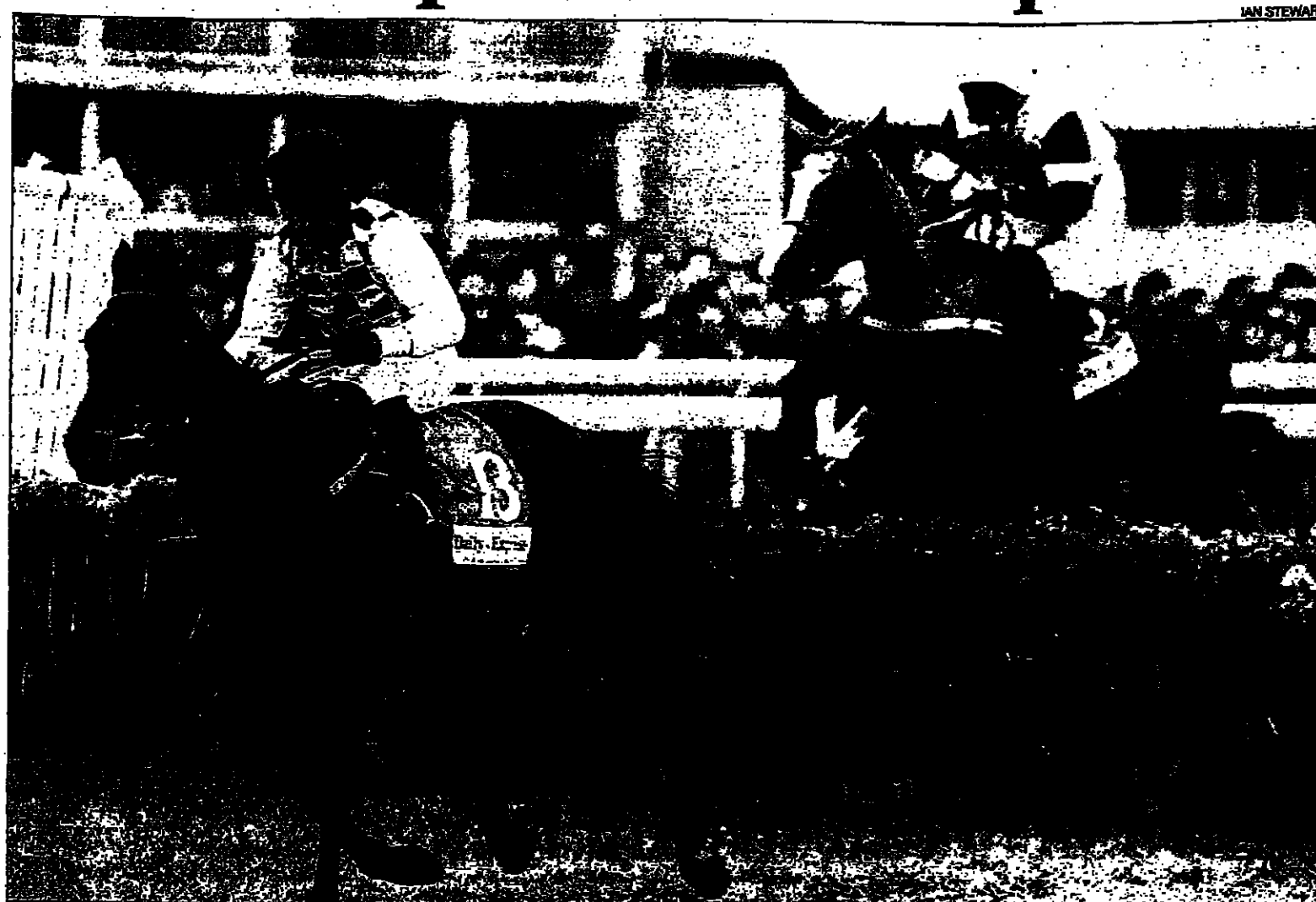
Lower finds hope in second opinion

By JULIAN MUSCAT

THE professional future of Jonathan Lower, the jockey diagnosed with diabetes six months ago, will be shaped in London today when medical experts are to discuss the condition with the Jockey Club's licensing committee.

Views formed by members of the committee will be instrumental in determining the Jockey Club's policy on diabetes. Their conclusions are crucial to Lower, who has not ridden in a race since his condition was detected after a schooling accident in May.

Lower, 29, was advised not to reapply for his annual jockey's licence on the grounds



A reminder of happier times for Lower as he partners the Pipe-trained Kissair to win the 1995 Triumph Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival

Nap: BOLANEY GIRL (1.50 Catterick)
Next best: Academy House (12.40 Fontwell Park)

he could pose a danger to himself and other riders if he blacked out during a race. The decision was prompted by the Jockey Club's chief medical adviser, Dr Michael Turner, who argued diabetes was prevented from holding an HGV drivers' licence for similar reasons.

David Pipe, the Jockey Club's director of public affairs, said yesterday: "There are so many different views among experts in this field. Some feel it is totally inappropriate and dangerous for jockeys to continue riding. Others believe it should constitute no extra risk if it is properly regulated. The committee will hear both sides of the argument before deciding, at a later date, what course of action to take."

Dr Turner, who organised the seminar, is among eight experts on the panel. He is joined by Dr Walter Halley, the Irish Turf Club's medical officer, whose opinions

together with those of Dr Welby Henry, of Belfast City Hospital — are broadly similar to Dr Turner's. The two Irish medics were involved in the identical plight of Pat McWilliams, the Irish jockey who successfully appealed against the Turf Club's decision to revoke his licence after he, too, was diagnosed as diabetic.

Initially, Lower was astonished to learn of his condition. "But it was an even bigger shock when Dr Turner said I

couldn't ride anymore," he said. "It was sickening because riding is my whole life. When I found out about it I went straight to a specialist to ask how it would affect my job. He told me he couldn't see any problem."

The jockey has been attached to Martin Pipe's stable since he left school 13 years ago. His frustration has reached fever pitch as Pipe-trained horses have carried all before them this season. His enforced inactivity has coincided with the departure of

Pipe's stable jockey, David Bridgwater. Lower would almost certainly have deputised in Bridgwater's absence.

However, Dr Turner's decision to broaden the debate offers Lower encouragement. "I have spoken to Pat McWilliams and he is riding with no problems at all in Ireland," he said. "The blood tests I took last week were all good and my doctors will be supporting me when I reapply for my licence shortly. I'm

riding on six or seven lots a day, doing all the work at home and then watching others do the winning at the races. I have missed it more than I could ever imagine."

Requisite changes to Lower's diet has seen his weight rise but he insists shedding the extra poundage will not be difficult. However, it is this aspect of a jockey's life that concerns some medics concerned. They believe the exhausting combination of constant dieting and hours of road

travel make it more difficult to regulate the condition.

Significantly, perhaps, the Injured Jockeys' Fund is prepared to support Lower's application for a licence. The charity would hardly endorse such a request if it sensed any danger to another subscriber of its cause. Meanwhile, Lower can only wait for the licensing committee's findings to discover whether he can return to work.

Flockton Grey appeal, page 3

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1.40 Dress Dance

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 112143 GOOD TIMES 13 (B.F., S.) (Mr. D. Robinson) 8 Nov 12-40 ... B West (7) 88
Raced numbers: 50-figures from 0-9. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st, 122nd, 123rd, 124th, 125th, 126th, 127th, 128th, 129th, 130th, 131st, 132nd, 133rd, 134th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 139th, 140th, 141st, 142nd, 143rd, 144th, 145th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th, 151st, 152nd, 153rd, 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Defining moments in documentary-making

Reporting has been defined as long periods of inertia broken by frantic bursts of activity and I imagine that documentary-making is much the same. Miles, story, kilometres of videotape, silently meandering between sprockets in complex Japanese machines, recording the uniformly mundane and the occasionally startling.

Camera operators wearing all-weather gear and a sceptical expression stand beside black Yorkshire roads in the dark and hope that a half-visible vehicle will do something interesting. Or, on a golf course, the sound recorder hangs his great furry mike over a man known for his circumspection and prays for a statement fit to twitch an ear.

Sometimes, glory be, these exceptional events actually occur. The camera operator, the sound man, the interviewer, the producer and that rather attractive girl

wearing a clipboard dance a small jig and repair to the nearest bar, where they rehearse, over Pernod and lager, the story on which they will dine out for months.

It happened last night. It happened twice last night, and the same programme. As the camera operator very likely put it "I'm standing there, freezing. I'm trying to make a top-secret four-wheel drive look interesting in the pitch black, when the thing stops right in front of me. The motor's sprung a leak. All of a sudden I'm filming two top execs from Rover carrying water from a stream in a plastic bag. You wouldn't believe it."

Not unless you had seen it. When Rover Met BMW (BBC2), one of the best documentary series of the year, ended with a couple of moments that made the game worth the candle. There was the hush-hush "compact" Land Rover leaking water and there was the deposed chief executive, on afore-

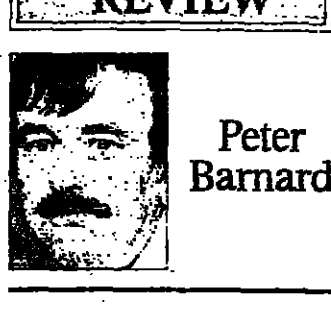
mentioned golf course, leaking a hint of the truth.

When John Towers was running Rover his golf handicap was 18. Now it is much better. In the programme he nearly holed a 20-footer, encouraged by his wife, who is herself no mean striker of a golf ball. Towers had been noncommittal throughout the series, which charted the takeover of Rover by BMW, but far short of the 19th hole he decided to open up.

"You've always got someone to whom you're responsible and this does tend to make someone like me feel that it probably won't be a terribly rewarding or productive existence to be administering that process."

Well, all right. I never said it was sensational. But by comparison with what had gone before, this was as startling a statement as you could imagine. It was like John

REVIEW



Peter Barnard

Major being asked if he was for or against monetary union and actually giving an answer.

And we all knew what Towers meant. He meant his company had been taken over by Germans. He had given it a try, he had welcomed with open arms the chairman of BMW, a man called Bernd, and he had not thrown a tantrum when one of Bernd's cronies became chairman of

Rover. But you could tell that John and Bernd did not have the longevity of Morecambe and Wise, nor were they half as funny.

So John resigned, went off to run an engineering company and spend more time with his putter. Marriage to BMW had made a lot of sense to John, but you had the feeling he wasn't too sure about the bride's family. A pushy lot. There was much talk about culture, the German culture, the British culture, but you sensed that only one culture was going to impose itself.

Not that Rover, once known as the ultimate skiving machine, will not benefit from a little German efficiency. What next? Perhaps the British legal profession, as seen on The Verdict (BBC2), could benefit from serious men in serious haircuts. The Verdict is a generally good series but last night it got off to a hopeless start. The subject was barristers, a profession in which there is enough overpayment and

allegations of sloppy work to fill half an hour of anybody's prime time. Unfortunately the programme began with a case of a farmer fighting to keep his land who suffered an enforced change of barrister at the last moment.

The farmer lost in court initially, but won on appeal, and the verdict was that the change of barrister had "probably made no difference". The programme had started with a damp squib, but if you bothered to persist there were fireworks to come.

One man on a wounding charge sat in Shrewsbury jail waiting for a barrister who never materialised: he had called to say he was delayed by traffic but it transpired that he had not thought Shrewsbury was near Luton (they are 130 miles apart). So defendant did not meet brief before the case. Worse, the barrister arrived in court only as the case

was starting. Outcome: a four-year jail sentence for the accused. The barrister was "admonished" for professional misconduct.

Part of the trouble is that barristers take on too much work, another part is the so-called "warned list" — cases liable to be called at short notice. This means that if a case is called at 24 hours' notice, the barrister who is familiar with it may be "part heard", meaning tied up in another court. Thus the brief is dumped on another barrister, sometimes with predictable results.

The oddest thing is that barristers are immune from the very legal process at which they make a living. We cannot sue them. Sir Louis Blom-Cooper said that this was all wrong: "It should be no different from any other profession." He has been saying that for 30 years and it's about time the case was called: how about tomorrow?

- BBC1**
- 6.00am BUSINESS BREAKFAST (16094)
7.00am BBC BREAKFAST NEWS (1) (47365)
9.00am BREAKFAST NEWS EXTRA (1) (118810)
9.25am STYLE CHALLENGE (4141029)
9.45am KILROY Studio debate (5804278)
10.30am CAN'T COOK, WON'T COOK (16810)
11.00am NEWS (1) and weather (357162)
11.05am THE REALLY USEFUL SHOW
Consumer matters (558075)
11.45am MILLIE'S PEOPLE (7636146)
12.00am NEWS (1) and weather (179079)
12.05pm POLICE RESCUE (1) (848828)
12.55am THE WEATHER SHOW (3505227)
1.00am NEWS (1) and weather (40452)
1.30am REGIONAL NEWS (2817986)
1.40am NEIGHBOURS (1) (2948162)
2.00am CALL MY BLUFF (9655)
2.30am A WEEK IN THE COUNTRY (58)
3.00am INCOGNITO (8162)
3.00am ANTS IN YOUR PAINTS (5102810) 3.50
Chucklevision (5105456) 4.50am The
Own Back (1) (1038394) 4.30am
The Queen's Nose (1) (7222297) 5.00
Newsround (1) (5537558) 5.10am Blue Peter
(1) (559146)
5.35am NEIGHBOURS (1) (116758)
6.00am NEWS (1) and weather (87)
6.30am REGIONAL NEWS (839)
7.00am SMALL TALK Gameshow with Ronnie
Corbett (3471)
7.30am HERE AND NOW Sue Lawley and the
team present more investigations and
items of interest (723)
8.00am HOW DO THEY DO THAT? Eamonn
Holmes and Esther McVey reveal how a
stuntman performed delicate-defying car
stunts on a top of a skyscraper for a TV
advent (1) (946075)
8.50am POINTS OF VIEW presented by Anne
Robinson (1) (40055)
9.00am NEWS (1) REGIONAL NEWS and
weather (936)
9.30am THE X FILES: Piper Maru Drama series
about two FBI agents who investigate the
mystery surrounding a Second World War
aircraft discovered deep in the Pacific
Ocean. When attempts are made to
salvage the plane, it appears that the
original pilot is still alive in the wreckage.
With David Duchovny and Gillian
Anderson (1/2) (1) (813639)
10.15am HARRY ENFIELD AND CHUMS (1) (1)
(269723) WALES: 10.15am Kane's Wales
10.45am Harry Enfield and Chums 11.15am
The Lonely Guy 12.40am FILM:
Skin Game 2.20am News headlines;
weather
10.45am FILM: The Lonely Guy (1984) starring
Martin and Charles Grodin. A young
man thrown out by his girlfriend
feels lost and alone in New York City. He
is befriended by a lonely soulmate.
Directed by Arthur Hiller (927907)
12.10am FILM: Skin Game (1971) starring
James Garner. Two women form a
profitable partnership posing as master
and slave. Directed by Paul Bogart
(72563)
1.50am WEATHER (819679)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCards
The numbers next to each TV programme
listing are Video PlusCards. To see the
full details of each programme, turn to the
Video PlusCards section on page 48. The
Video PlusCards are a new way of
watching TV. They are available in
Video PlusCards and Video PlusCards
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They are available in Video PlusCards
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● For more comprehensive
listings of satellite and cable
channels, see the Directory,
published on Saturday

SKY 1

- 7.00am Love Connection (4003007) 7.20
Press Your Luck (401474) 7.40 Joppy
(533391) 8.10 The New Adventures of
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RACING 43

Medical panel to consider diabetic jockey's future

SPORT

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4 1996

Croft comes to rescue after touring team's early collapse

England's new order shows old failing

FROM SIMON WILDE IN HARARE

HARARE (first day of four, England won toss): England have scored 175 for nine wickets against Mashonaland.

TWO and a half days' cricket may not be much on which to draw conclusions, but, in the case of an England cricket team, they may well be enough. The indications are that their tour of Zimbabwe is taking on all the unwelcome characteristics of so many previous failed missions, with the important difference that this is Zimbabwe. Raymond Illingworth's remark that "if we cannot beat Zimbabwe, we really are in trouble" may yet

Warne's magic 45
Gallant chase 45
Loyal servants 46

go down as one of his most famous.

But we are running ahead of ourselves. England have yet to meet the full might of Zimbabwe before that, they must beat Mashonaland and, on the evidence of the first day's play at Harare Sports Club here yesterday, they might struggle to do that.

England, fielding their self-proclaimed Test XI, staggered through a day shortened by rain and had light to 175 for nine, a meagre total that would have been considerably swifter but for a batting, unbeaten 66 from Robert Croft, who has scarcely put a foot wrong since his first full tour began.

Croft batted at No 7 behind the six batsmen in whom England are so firmly pinning

their faith but who yesterday only mustered 71 runs between them. Locals say that the key to building big totals here is negotiating the first session of each day's play: that is when there is most life in the pitch and the ball moves most extravagantly. If that can be accomplished, as Croft showed, there are runs to be made, but the specialist batsmen never found out because they failed in the first task so woefully, as scores of seven for three and then, at lunch, 78 for five suggest.

England looked rusty and accident-prone, as two run-outs and two batsmen playing on attempting to withdraw their bats testify. The tone of their sorry day was set by an unexpected failure by Atherton, the captain, who arrived here proclaiming his freshness and enthusiasm. Already he is walking around the boundary edge looking like a wilted lily.

On Sunday, he survived two balls; yesterday, three — and each innings was so nearly shorter still as they contained confident appeals for leg-before.

Yesterday, he had just time to score his first runs of the tour before he was opened up by an outswinger and caught behind off the bowling of James Kirtley, the young Sussex seamer, who had helped England in the nets last week.

Atherton was promptly followed in successive overs by Stewart and Hussain, both of whom were slightly unlucky to see balls ricochet off the backs of their upheld bats into the stumps, but there is a



A dejected Atherton takes his leave after being dismissed for two by Kirtley at the Harare Sports Club yesterday

simple way to cut out that dismissal and that is to hit the ball. Knight, at the other end, looked more solid before a difference of opinion over a third run with Thorpe left him stranded in the middle of the pitch.

Thorpe and Crawley played carefully and confidently through the next 90 minutes, adding 38 and looking good for many more, before Thorpe mistimed a back-foot drive into the covers and the ball leapt into the hands of the diving Houghton, the Mashonaland captain.

Then another needless run-out cost Crawley his wicket, Croft sending him back on the search for a quick single. After Kirtley quickly removed Gough, it became a face-

saving exercise and one that dismissed yesterday, though he was badly missed on 49 off Kirtley.

Croft and Kirtley were two Englishmen on show yesterday with something in common and that was their sheer enthusiasm. While Croft has made a favourable impression and kept Russell, his room-mate, amused with his wisecracks, the England team as a whole has already attracted criticism for its unwillingness to socialise and expose itself to an alien but hospitable culture. The consequences of that for their approach on the field are all too obvious.

Contrast this with how Kirtley, 21 and playing his twelfth first-class match,

came to be playing in Zimbabwe this winter. He knew England were coming and wanted to be near them and, by asking around, gained a place with Old Georgians, a club in Harare. Having played once for Mashonaland and done well, he badgered Houghton for ten days to let him play in this game and, when Brandes withdrew through injury on Monday, he got his way.

He served up three excellent spells yesterday, bowling straight at a lively pace and swinging the ball consistently. He finished with four wickets and deserved a fifth, not only Croft but Tufnell being dropped off stumps during a last-wicket stand that has so far realised 30 runs.

Fifa moves to confirm Belfast tie

THE World Cup qualifying match between Northern Ireland and Albania in Belfast a week on Saturday will go ahead after Fifa yesterday decided to allow Albania back into the international footballing fold. The sport's world governing body had suspended Albania indefinitely after the country's sports ministry ordered the suspension of Oded Dervishi, the national Football Association's general secretary, and dissolved its executive committee.

"We were 99 per cent certain the game would go ahead, but now we have it in writing we can get on with the job of selling tickets," David Bowen, the Irish Football Association secretary, said. "While there was any doubt, the public was always going to hold back. Now it's all systems go."

The dispute in Albania erupted when Marieta Promari, the sports secretary, censured Dervishi for postponing new executive committee elections, a move which apparently breaks the country's civil law. Yet Fifa insisted that it did not recognise the suspensions and still considered Dervishi and the dissolved executive as its only official contacts in the country.

Aleksander Meksi, the Albanian prime minister, sought to mediate and his involvement finally brought a satisfactory conclusion to the matter yesterday. Keith Cooper, a Fifa spokesman, said: "Everything is now ready for the game to go ahead."

Barber is asked to review decision

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

ARSENAL have sent the Football Association a video of their 2-1 win at Newcastle United on Saturday and confirmed they want the referee, Graham Barber, to review his decision to send off their captain, Tony Adams.

Arsene Wenger, the Arsenal manager, said: "I cannot put any pressure on the referee because I think he had a difficult decision to make, but

for Newcastle, but Arsenal contend that their defender was put off by Faustino Asprilla running back from an offside position and letting the ball go between his legs.

Wenger said: "Asprilla's position created the whole problem and Tony had to go around him to make his challenge. After looking closely at the film, I now believe it should have been an offside decision in our favour."

Officially, the FA will now only request Barber to reconsider his decision, but earlier this season Paul Danson, the Leicester referee, admitted he was wrong to send off Paul Stewart of Sunderland, for a second yellow card against Arsenal at Highbury and the striker escaped a ban.

Chris Armstrong and Andy Stanton, of Tottenham Hotspur, sustained injuries in the 2-0 defeat by Liverpool on Monday night that could force them to miss the match against Coventry City on Saturday. Darren Anderson, the England midfielder, is already ruled out because of knee ligament damage.

However, Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, is hoping to rush through the signing of Steffen Iversen, the Norway Under-21 and Rosenborg striker, in time for him to play at Highfield Road, Ipswich, 20, is due to arrive at White Hart Lane tomorrow for a medical examination that should conclude his £2.6 million move.

ENGLAND XI: First innings	
N V Knight run out	6
M A Atherton c D J R Campbell	2
b Kirtley	2
24 J Stewart b G C Strong	2
N Hussain b Kirtley	2
G P Thorpe c Houghton	2
b Hussain	25
J P Crawley run out	25
R B Croft not out	66
D Gough c D J R Campbell b Kirtley	2
A R Caddell c D J R Campbell	1
b Stewart	19
A D Insole c Gough b Kirtley	3
P C Tufnell not out	1
Extras (no 4, w 3, nb 6)	13
Total (9 wickets)	176
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-3, 2-4, 3-7, 4-27, 5-33, 6-38, 7-44, 8-125, 9-145.	
BOWLING: Kirtley 19-2-44-4; B C Strong 16-2-42-1; Stewart 1-1-20-1; P A Stewart 13-6-24-0; Marshman 10-0-34-1.	
MASHONALAND: D L Houghton, S V Carrillo, G W Power, A D R Campbell, 20; J R G Campbell, C B West, O Maitumbano, P A Strong, B C Strong, G B Brett, R J Kirtley.	

Pienaar joins Saracens bandwagon

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

CAN this season have any greater shocks in store than the announcement, yesterday, in the virtual reality world of Pienaar's Trocadero, that Francois Pienaar is to join Saracens? That the blond flanker, who lifted rugby union's World Cup for South Africa nearly 18 months ago will grace the environs of Twickenham?

It is just one more leap of imagination, which takes Pienaar from the massive structure at Ellis Park, Johannesburg, where the World Cup was won, where his province, Transvaal, have their home, to suburban north London. Yet Michael Lynagh, the world record points-scorer from Australia, and Philippe Sella, the world's most-capped player from France, are there and now Pienaar will join them.

Only a season ago, Saracens were confined to a public park pitch at Southgate, their first division future in doubt. Now they have three of the world's most charismatic players on their staff, thanks to the millions that Nigel Wray has poured into them. Pienaar will move to London on December 23 and his first match will be the less than charismatic league meeting with Orrell five days later.

Saracens have been able to take advantage of the fact that, earlier this autumn, Andre Markgraaff, the new South Africa coach, saw no future in the national side for Pienaar. The curt dismissal of the flanker capped 29 times between 1993 and 1996, each time as captain, left Pienaar, 29, and the rugby supporters of his country stunned but also open to the possibility of a new future.

Aware of his status in South Africa, Pienaar contacted Nelson Mandela, the state president, who wore Pienaar's No 6 shirt at the World Cup final, and received his support. He also cleared the move with Louis Luyt, president of the South African Rugby Football Union (SARU), since he still had 18 months of his SARU contract left to run.

That contract is now void and Pienaar comes to London until May 1999 for a sum said to be not less than £350,000. The deal was clinched in total secrecy; Saracens players only became aware of their new recruit yesterday morning.

"It's new, it's very exciting," Pienaar said. "I can pick up a lot of experience from world greats like Lynagh and Sella but also I can bring something fresh to the game. The decision was helped when I met Nigel Wray and we hit it off, and my wife, Nerine, gave me a boost when she told me we should go for it."

Pienaar scorned suggestions that his move would be seen as "high treason" in South Africa. "Nelson Mandela said he was sorry, but I explained I would be representing South Africa, would try and put an ambassadorial gave me his blessing."

He has not returned to international rugby, though harsh reality suggests that it is unlikely. "I need rugby, rugby doesn't need me," Pienaar said. "My appetite for the game has grown since the captaincy issue."

That appetite will help ambitious English players such as Tony Dwyer, the Saracens captain, and Richard Hill achieve international honours, according to Wray. "This will help lift our game out of its insularity; it will draw youngsters to the sport and put it up where it belongs," the Saracens owner said.

El David Campese will bid farewell to rugby in Great Britain when, he plays for Australia against the Barbarians at Twickenham on Saturday. Campese, who won his 101st and final cap during the 28-19 victory over Wales, is retained as the Wallabies play the final match of their successful European tour.

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